

# Conversation Contents

## Weekly Report to the Secretary

### Attachments:

/59. Weekly Report to the Secretary/1.1 Weekly Report to the Secretary  
May13-19.docx

**"Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>**

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**Sent:** Fri May 11 2018 06:07:21 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
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**Subject:** Weekly Report to the Secretary

**Attachments:** Weekly Report to the Secretary May13-19.docx

All,

Attached is the weekly report to the Secretary in both Word and Google Doc formats.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Matthew Dermody  
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 [Weekly Report to the Secretary May13-19.docx](#)

**WEEKLY REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
MAY 13-19, 2018**

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt will be in the office all week.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Todd Willens will be in the office all week.

Associate Deputy Secretary Jim Cason will be in the office all week.

**Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

[NEW] During the month of May, the Department will release a memo to reform recreational shooting management on public lands. This initiative proactively responds to the fatal tragedy that occurred in Arizona earlier this year by directing the Bureaus to revise existing and implement new policies and guidelines that expand access to recreational shooting opportunities while promoting firearm safety, education, and training.

**15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

No updates to report.

**Awareness**

No updates to report.

**OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Congressional Hearings, and Travel**

Principal Deputy Solicitor Dan Jorjani will be working from the headquarters office for the reporting period.

Acting Deputy Solicitor for Land Resources will participate in a panel at the National Mitigation Banking Conference on Friday, May 11. She will be part of a roundtable discussion with participants from other federal regulating agencies including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

**Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

**NEW CASES:**

*Olson, et al. v. United States*, (Ct. Fed. Cl.)

Sixteen plaintiffs have filed a complaint for breach of contract in the United States Court of Federal Claims claiming that the Wapato Irrigation Project, within the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), breached their contractual right to receive irrigation water in the 2013 growing season. The Solicitor's Office (SOL) attorneys and the Commercial Litigation Branch of the Civil Division of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) are coordinating. The government's answer is due June 22. We are in the process of gathering documents from the BIA and drafting a litigation report.

*Western Watersheds Project v. Zinke* (D. Idaho filed April 30, 2018) and *Montana Wildlife Federation v. Zinke* (D. Mont. filed April 30, 2018) - Oil and Gas Leasing in Western United States

These complaints challenge numerous oil and gas-related actions or pending actions, contending that Bureau of Land Management (BLM) violated the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) by failing to prioritize leasing decisions outside of Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat, which is required by the 2015 GRSG land use plan decisions, and violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by failing to adequately consider the environmental impacts of those decisions on GRSG.

In the first suit, Western Watersheds Project and Center for Biological Diversity challenge BLM's national Instruction Memoranda (IMs) relating to prioritization of oil and gas leasing, IM 2018-026, and oil and gas leasing reform, IM 2018-034. Plaintiffs argue that these IMs violate NEPA and FLPMA and that the leasing reform IM constitutes a legislative rule adopted in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). Plaintiffs also challenge eight oil and gas lease sales conducted from 2017 to 2018 in Wyoming, Montana, and Utah. They identify several other oil and gas lease sales in Wyoming, Nevada, Idaho, and Utah, and two BLM Wyoming oil and gas projects as pending or cumulative actions. Plaintiffs argue that the lease sales were inconsistent with the 2015 GRSG plans because BLM failed to prioritize outside of GRSG habitat and use best available science. Plaintiffs' NEPA arguments generally assert that BLM did not adequately evaluate impacts to GRSG, including cumulative impacts, or consider a range of reasonable alternatives.

In the second suit, Montana Wildlife Federation, The Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society, and National Wildlife Federation make similar arguments. Plaintiffs contend that the Department and BLM violated FLPMA and NEPA when issuing BLM's lease prioritization IM and the Secretary's memorandum directing BLM to implement the recommendations in its August 4, 2017, GRSG report. Plaintiffs also challenge six oil and gas lease sales in Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming, making FLPMA and NEPA arguments similar to those raised in *Western Watersheds Project*.

## **SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:**

*Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance v. US DOI, et al.* (W.D. Wis.) - NPS Federal Lands to Parks' Approval of a Change of Use of Wisconsin Recreation Area- Grant of Summary Judgment to NPS



On May 4, the Court granted summary judgment to the National Park Service, dismissing Plaintiff Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance's allegations that NPS had violated the Federal Property Act and NEPA when it approved new higher-impact recreational uses on a property conveyed to the State of Wisconsin for public park and recreation uses. The park had previously been used for hiking, birding, and other low-impact activities; new uses include dog training and motorcycle events. The court held that the new uses are appropriate under the "public park and recreation" standard for which the NPS conveyed the land, and that the NPS complied with NEPA through a documented categorical exclusion.

*Cachil Dehe Band of Wintun Indians of the Colusa Indian Community. v. Zinke, et al.* (9th Cir.); *Citizens for a Better Way, et al. v. Zinke, et al.* (9th Cir.)

On May 2, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the district court's decision in favor of the Department in an action seeking to enjoin the BIA from taking land into trust for Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria for gaming purposes. The Colusa and Citizens actions were consolidated in district court and heard before the Ninth Circuit in a combined oral argument. The Court held that the Department had statutory authority under the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) to take land into trust for Enterprise. The Court further held that, pursuant 25 C.F.R. § 151.11(a), the Secretary properly considered Enterprise's "need" for the land. The Court rejected plaintiffs' challenges based on the IGRA. The panel held that the BIA properly consulted with Colusa, and denied Colusa's claims that the Department's regulations defining "nearby" as within twenty-five miles are invalid. The Court also held that the Secretary's finding that the proposed casino project would not be "detrimental to the surrounding community," 25 U.S.C. § 2719(b)(1)(A), was not arbitrary and capricious. Although the Department concluded that casinos closest to the proposed gaming facility are expected to experience a loss in revenue, Colusa did not argue that it would represent a detrimental loss. Further, the Court found that it is within the expertise of the Agency to determine the likelihood required mitigation measures will be followed. The Court also rejected plaintiffs' claims under NEPA. The Final Environmental Impact Statement's purpose and need statement was not artificially limited, and Colusa waived any argument that Interior's failed to consider its proposed alternatives.

*Wildlands Defense v. Seesholtz*, (D. Idaho)

On May 4, the Court denied plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction in this challenge to post-fire rehabilitation and timber sale projects on the Boise National Forest. The Court determined that the plaintiffs "have not raised serious questions on the merits" in their challenge to the Forest Service (FS) decision and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS') ESA concurrence.

*Board of County Commissioners of the County of San Miguel, Colorado v. U.S. Bureau of Land Management* (D. Colo.) - NEPA, ESA, and FLPMA Challenge to Oil and Gas Leasing  
Federal defendants filed a partial motion to dismiss the ESA claims on December 15, 2017. A hearing on the partial motion to dismiss was held on May 2. The court concluded that the motion was premature, denied it "at this time," and expressed the view that jurisdictional discovery would be helpful. The parties and the court agreed on an alternative approach in which BLM will prepare the administrative record and provide it to petitioners for review, before the parties raise and the court addresses the potential issue of the appropriateness of discovery.

*PetroMex, LLC v. United States* (Fed. Cl.) - Breach of Contract

On April 30, United States Court of Claims Senior Judge denied both the plaintiff's and government's cross motions for summary judgment on PetroMex breach of contract complaint. Petro Mex is seeking in excess of \$5 million in damages for BLM's attempted termination an oil and gas lease while operations and production were suspended in August 2009 for environmental considerations. The Judge found issues of fact related to the government's statute of limitations and material breach prior to termination claims, so that he could not rule on summary judgment for the government. He also denied plaintiff's cross motion for summary judgment finding no issue preclusion from a previous Interior Board of Land Appeal (IBLA) ruling. In his order Judge Hodges required the parties to submit a joint status report on or before May 11, proposing a schedule for expert witness discovery on damages and other pre-trial dates, so that the parties can prepare for trial at the earliest date possible.

**OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:**

*San Carlos Irrigation and Drainage District v. United States* (Fed. Cl.)

On June 12, 2017, the San Carlos Irrigation and Drainage District (SCIDD) filed a suit against BIA alleging breach of contract, breach of implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing, and breach of trust and fiduciary duty. SCIDD's complaint relates to the operation and maintenance costs assessed annually by BIA through the San Carlos Irrigation Project, a federal irrigation project that provides irrigation water to public and private lands and lands within the Gila River Indian Community. The answer was filed on September 1, 2017, and discovery is on-going. A joint status report is due May 18.

*John Miller v. United States* (D. Nev.)

This is a \$750,000 Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) case filed by a former Reno-Sparks Indian Colony police officer alleging BIA was negligent in his allegedly wrongful termination. Pursuant to a March 15, order, Plaintiff filed a second amended complaint on April 4. The United States filed a motion to dismiss on May 2. In the meantime, Magistrate Judge Cobb issued a scheduling order on April 30 requiring the parties to complete discovery on or before September 11. However, the United States intends to request that discovery be postponed pending disposition of the United States' motion to dismiss.

*United States v. Jon Saltzman* (OHA - Hearings Division)

On June 8, 2017, BLM filed two contests alleging that seven mining claims were void *ab initio* because they had been fraudulently located as association placer claims. BLM discovered the violations while conducting validity examinations to determine if Appellant had property interests in the claims, pursuant to Court of Federal Claims order in *Saltzman v. United States*, No. 13-1014L (Fed. Cl), in which Appellant asserted that BLM's annual maintenance fee increase is a taking. Appellant filed "Cross-Motions to Dismiss" in December 2017. OHA denied the motions on May 1. OHA is expected to set a conference call in the very near future to discuss procedural options, including whether an evidentiary hearing is necessary.

*Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) v. Zinke* (D. Alaska) - Pacific Walrus

The government's answer is due May 10. On March 8, CBD filed its complaint challenging the Service's determination that listing the Pacific walrus as threatened or endangered is not warranted at this time. The current population of Pacific walrus stands at approximately 283,000, with higher reproduction rates than in earlier decades and indicators of behavioral adaptation to reduced levels of sea ice.

*Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Society, et al. v. Zinke* (D. Alaska) - Izembek Land Exchange

On May 3, the government filed its answer to the amended complaint. The following day, the Court issued an order granting Defendant-Intervenor status to the King Cove Corporation, the Aleutians East Borough, the City of King Cove, the Aadaagux Tribal Council, the Native Village of Belkofski, and the City of Cold Bay. Plaintiff is challenging the Secretary's planned land exchange with the King Cove Corporation within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

*Sturgeon v. Frost* (Supreme Court)

The United States' response to plaintiff's petition for writ of cert was filed on May 7. At issue is a Ninth Circuit decision affirming NPS's authority to regulate hovercraft use on certain waters within the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Conservation System Units in Alaska. Citing the *Katie John* precedent, the Ninth Circuit held that the United States has an implied reservation of water rights in the Nation River, rendering it "public lands" for purposes of ANILCA.

*Northern Alaska Environmental Center, et al. v. Ryan Zinke, et al.*

On May 4, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska approved the parties' Joint Motion for Case Management and Scheduling in this lawsuit involving a NEPA challenge to BLM's 2017 NPR-A lease sale. Assuming no challenge to the administrative record is taken, which was filed on May 4. Plaintiffs' opening summary judgment brief is due June 4th, followed by the United States' response brief due on July 24, (which is to also serve as a cross-motion for summary judgment) and Plaintiffs' reply brief due on August 7. This lawsuit is similar to one filed the same day by another coalition of environmental groups (*Natural Resources Defense Council et al. v. Ryan Zinke et al.*), which challenges the NEPA adequacy of BLM's 2016 and 2017 NPR-A lease sales on other grounds. The court-approved briefing schedules for both cases are identical.

*Triumvirate, LLC v. Zinke* (AK District Court) - Challenge to Special Recreation Permit

On May 1, the Alaska district court granted in part the government's motion to dismiss. Plaintiff, a commercial helicopter skiing operator with a permit to take clients to the Tordrillo and Neacola Mountains in southcentral Alaska, filed a complaint and a motion for preliminary injunction in which it challenged BLM's decision to give a similar permit to a competing helicopter skiing business for the same area. Plaintiff's only remaining claims relate to his contention of increased safety risks and a procedural claim for lack of opportunity to comment, both arising under FLPMA. The Court will hear oral argument on these claims at a future date yet to be determined.

*In re. ATP Oil & Gas Corp.* (S.D. Tx Bankr) - Offshore Bankruptcy

On May 3, Sojitz Energy Venture Inc. filed an adversary proceeding in the ATP bankruptcy case seeking a declaratory judgment that it has no obligation to decommission the facilities on Ship Shoal Lease Block 358 (SS 358). Sojitz argues that the government used funds set aside in a lease specific trust account with ATP that covered SS 358 to decommission another lease and by doing so impaired its subrogation rights and breached the earlier trust (to which Sojitz was not a party). Sojitz also argues that the Department of the Interior (DOI) failed to properly investigate the financial health of the company to which the lease was assigned and to enforce the bureau's security requirements. The government's response is due June 1.

*Clean Air Council v. U.S.* (E.D. Pa.) - Climate Change

The United States filed our reply to plaintiff's opposition to our motion to dismiss on May 3. We are awaiting the court's order scheduling oral argument. Plaintiffs are an environmental group and two children. This case is similar to the *Juliana* case in the District of Oregon, but these plaintiffs are more focused on this Administration's policy changes that they allege violate their constitutional rights and the public trust doctrine.

*Integrated Security Solutions, Inc.* B-416294.1 (GAO) – Probable Corrective Action

On April 23, Integrated Security Solutions (ISS) has challenged BIA's award of a contract related to replacing analog surveillance equipment at the Northern Cheyenne Adult Jail. ISS believes that it should have been the awardee due to having the lowest cost and high technical rating and that BIA's evaluation was flawed in multiple ways. We currently are working with BIA to address ISS' allegations; (b) (5)

The agency report is due to the Government Accounting Office (GAO) on May 23.

*Sierra Club, et al. v. National Park Service, et al.; Defenders of Wildlife, et al. v. Fish and Wildlife Service, et al.* (Atlantic Coast Pipeline)

A moot court in preparation for oral argument in this challenge to FWS' Biological Opinion and National Park Services' (NPS') Right-of-way (ROW) permit for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline is being held on May 7. Oral argument is anticipated before the Fourth Circuit on May 10. Appellants, *Sierra Club, et al.* assert that the NPS lacked authority to issue the ROW permits and that FWS improperly used a habitat surrogate in determining acceptable take under the ESA.

*Amerikohl Mining, Inc. v. Zinke* (W.D. Pa.)

On April 27, the DOJ and DOI representatives met with the Amerikohl representatives to mediate this litigation. The case is a request for judicial review of the IBLA's August 31, 2017, affirmance of two Notices of Violation and the failure-to-abate Cessation Order issued to the permittee by Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) for failure to provide adequate sedimentation controls and for associated effluent violations at the cited surface coal mining operation. The principal issue in the case was whether timbering conducted by the landowner was independent of the mining operation, or connected to it, providing the regulatory authorities jurisdiction to enforce the surface mining regulatory program. The decision found the factual findings of the Administrative Law Judge that the landowner cooperated with and coordinated the timbering with the permittee, cutting the timber only on the mine footprint and in compliance with an Indiana bat protection and enhancement plan issued to the permittee, was supported by the record. An agreement in principle was reached pending confirmation of

abatement of the violations. OSM agreed to waive civil penalties in exchange for withdrawal of the appeal, thus, preserving the precedent.

*Pacific Rivers v. Bureau of Land Management* (D. Or.) - BLM land use plans for BLM Western Oregon lands; FWS and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ESA Section 7 Consultations

This case involves ESA, NEPA, and Oregon & California Lands Act claims brought by conservation group plaintiffs and timber industry intervenors challenging two BLM's Records of Decision/Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for western Oregon. On May 15, the United States will file cross-motions for summary judgment on plaintiffs' claims and intervenors' cross-claims.

#### **NON-LITIGATION MATTERS:**

Enforcement Issues - (b) (5)

Members of the Knoxville Field Solicitor's Office and Division of Mineral Resources continue to advise OSMRE regarding new violations on the part of the (b) (5) and enforcement options. OSMRE is in the process of referring several Tennessee violations to SOL-KNX for alternative enforcement of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA), pursuant to 30 C.F.R. § 847.16. We have started the process of identifying all individual agents of the permittees who are personally liable for abating SMCRA violations under the holding in *United States v. Dix Fork Coal Co.*, 692 F.2d 436, (6th Cir. 1982). OSM is planning to meet with state regulatory authorities who are dealing with similar problems, initiate an ownership and control investigation, issue preliminary findings of ownership and control, inform the (b) (5) ' surety of issues on permit sites, and issue a show cause order to the permittee. The Solicitor's Office is drafting investigative subpoenas to be issued by OSMRE pursuant to SMCRA Section 201(c) and INF-5 and preparing additional briefing materials for management.

#### **Implementation of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement**

Under procedures developed by the SIWRO, the Division of Water Resources (DWR) provides support in the implementation of this recently enacted settlement, including drafting various documents necessary for the Secretary's execution of the settlement agreement and related documents. As part of this process, the Solicitor's Office requests (b) (5)

■(b) (5)

Meanwhile, DWR will provide a draft recommendation from SOL to the Secretary to the Front Office for review and finalization. SIWRO advises that a signing ceremony will be scheduled for mid-June and wants to expedite a final package through SOL and Executive Secretariat for surnaming by all relevant bureaus.

#### **Klamath Project Drought Relief**

DWR is working with Reclamation to implement the Reclamation Spend Plan for Klamath Basin drought activities. Reclamation will provide a list of drought response activities, and DWR will review those activities in light of Reclamation's existing authorities.

Southeastern and Southwestern Missouri Lead Mining District Natural Resources Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) -Return of Restoration Funds for Reuse  
DOI's Missouri State NRDAR Co-Trustee returned certain unspent funds that were originally intended for restoration activities within the State Parks that were proposed by the State. The Missouri co-trustees returned approximately \$400,000 to DOI and Missouri's joint account in the Natural Resources Damages Assessment and Restoration Fund. Missouri has decided to undertake the State Park restoration work with Missouri Department of Natural Resources funding, and work with DOI to re-program the returned funds for restoration projects under the existing restoration plan that address injuries caused by heavy-metal releases in Francois County and in the Big River riparian corridor.

#### California Bill S.B. 50 (Conveyances of Federal Land)

S.B. 50, which became effective on January 1, requires that the State must be provided with the right of first refusal before the United States conveys federal land or interests in land in the State of California. On April 2, DOJ filed a Complaint challenging the constitutionality of S.B. 50. The State's Answer to the Complaint is due May 8. On April 27, the State Lands Commission published draft regulations to implement S.B. 50 and is accepting comments through May 11. The regulations considerably narrow the scope of conveyances that would be subject to a right of first refusal because they would define a fairly wide range of "routine" transactions. We have also learned that New York is considering legislation (Assembly Bill 8797 and Senate Bill 7869) that largely mirrors S.B. 50, but with a more narrowly tailored definition of federal land conveyances that would be subject to a right of first refusal.

#### Mountain Valley Pipeline

Protests: two protesters remain encamped in trees, blocking necessary tree clearing and construction activities. A Virginia state senator sued the FS this week challenging the FS' issuance of closure orders and prohibition of access to the protest sites.

#### *Sierra Club v. U.S. DOI and Wilderness Society v. U.S. BLM* (4th Cir.)

Attorneys from the Solicitor's Office and representatives of BLM participated in a moot in advance of oral arguments on May 8.

#### Tennessee Primacy and Reclamation Act

The governor of Tennessee signed legislation to make the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) the primary regulatory authority in Tennessee for the enforcement of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. The Act requires the state to seek and receive federal funds for the initial development of a state program prior to initiating a rulemaking process that would serve as the basis for Tennessee's request to OSMRE to assume primacy.

#### Rulemaking - NPS Wildlife Harvest Regulations

NPS is finalizing a proposed rule to amend its regulations for sport hunting and trapping in national preserves in Alaska by removing regulatory provisions issued in 2015 that prohibit certain sport hunting practices that are otherwise permitted by the State of Alaska. The anticipated publication date is May 25. The rule being amended is presently the subject of three

consolidated cases filed in 2017 in the District Court of Alaska (3:17-cv-00013-SLG *State of Alaska v. Zinke, et al.*).

**Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) Production Safety Systems Rule**  
The Solicitor's Office completed its surnaming of this rule package (including preamble, regulatory text, Regulatory Impacts Analysis, and Environmental Assessment) through the Acting Solicitor on May 4. Upon Department surnaming of all final documents through the Deputy Secretary, the package will be transmitted to the Executive Secretariat and on to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to commence the OMB review process.

**Offshore Renewable Streamlining Rule**

The Solicitor's Office continues to participate in Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM's) working group for this rule, which has recently begun to draft the proposed regulatory text. BOEM has requested that the working group complete its initial draft by December 2018.

**OSMRE Regulatory Program ESA Section 7 Consultation**

On May 10, Division of Mineral Resources (DMR) and Division of Parks and Wildlife (DPW) attorneys will attend a meeting with Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC) and various state representatives to discuss OSMRE's decision to reinitiate section 7 consultation under the ESA for its Title V regulatory programs.

**Atlantic G&G Environmental Assessments (EAs) Review**

On May 4, DMR received four EAs that the BOEM has prepared for four Atlantic G&G Permit applications currently under review. The client has requested our comments by May 11.

**5-Year Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) Review**

On May 7, DMR received portions of the PEIS that BOEM is preparing for the 2019-2024 Program. The client has requested our comments by May 11.

**Proposed U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)–Colorado School of Mines (CSM) Cooperative Agreement**

Last week, we advised USGS program and contracting leadership that (b) (5)

We strongly recommended that (b) (5)

**Review of Semiquincentennial Commission Secretariat selection**

We have reviewed for legal sufficiency and provided some edits and comments on the proposed competitively awarded agreement with the Civil War Trust, led by NPS' acquisition office, under the competitive process as directed by the 2016 U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission Act.

**Chief of Police (COP) In-Service at Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)**



SOL attorneys taught several classes at the COP In-Service for the Indian Police Academy (IPA) in Artesia, New Mexico from May 1 through May 4. These classes included a legal update on issues that the Office of Justice Services (OJS) had faced throughout the year and how to write correspondence. The attorneys also participated in the Director's Run and attended the Indian Country Law Enforcement Memorial, where diverse DOI and BIA senior leaders spoke, including Acting Assistant Secretary-IA, John Tahsuda, and Director of the DOI Office of Law Enforcement and Security, Darren Cruzan. This year's memorial was especially poignant as Navajo Officer Huston Largo, the officer murdered in *United States v. Cleveland*, the criminal case that SOL opined on early last year, was honored along with his family members who were in attendance. The attorneys have been invited back to train OJS Internal Affairs Division on report writing.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

No update provided.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

From May 14-18, Susan Combs, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, will be in the office.

On May 15-17, Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith will be on travel in Mississippi speaking at Southern Company's 15th Annual Partner Stewardship Meeting co-hosted by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

On May 14-18, Deputy Assistant Secretary Ryan Hambleton will be in the office.

On May 15, NPS Deputy Director Dan Smith will attend the Captain John Smith Trail Advisory Council meeting at the Jamestowne Visitor Center in Virginia. On May 19, Dan Smith will conduct a site visit to Camp Nelson in Kentucky and attend the listening session being held by Representative Andy Barr (R-KY-6).

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**[NEW]** On May 10, FWS's Nebraska Ecological Services Field Office met with Department of State and its third party consultant (Potomac Hudson Engineering) to discuss the Keystone XL Pipeline Environmental Assessment and Biological Assessment in Nebraska. The agenda included discussion of the project and schedule, review of species data and information needs, and next steps including schedule of meetings with stakeholders including TransCanada and Bureau of Land Management. (05/09/2018)



**[NEW]** On or after May 10, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a Notice of Intent informing the public that we are no longer considering preparation of a programmatic environmental impact statement to evaluate a proposed rule to authorize incidental take under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The December 22, 2017, DOI Solicitor's Opinion M-37050 concluded that the MBTA's prohibition on pursuing, hunting, taking, capturing, killing or attempting to so the same applies only to direct and affirmative purposeful actions that reduce migratory birds, their eggs, or their nests, by killing or capturing, to human control," and does not apply to incidental take; therefore rulemaking to regulate incidental take, which we announced in May 2015, is no longer necessary. No outreach is planned. FWS will develop talking points to answer media and stakeholder questions should they arise. (05/09/2018)

**[UPDATE]** The week of May 14, FWS will announce updated eagle priors and seek comment on several options for applying them. "Priors" are inputs for the collision risk model (CRM) FWS uses to estimate eagle fatalities at wind energy facilities. In the 2016 final rule revising the eagle incidental take permit regulations, FWS committed to update the golden eagle priors and explore whether sufficient data exist to develop separate bald eagle exposure and collision priors. The revised priors incorporate much more data than the original priors; enough to create species-specific priors. The updated collision prior is slightly lower than the current prior for golden eagles and higher for bald eagles. No outreach is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (Updated 05/09/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 15, FWS will announce a final determination on the proposal to reclassify the Tobusch fishhook cactus from endangered to threatened. This plant species has shown significant recovery due in part to collaborative conservation efforts with partners. Supporters of this action include the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and The Nature Conservancy. FWS has gained positive coverage on downlisting proposals, and anticipates more interest when this final determination is announced. A communications plan has been developed. It includes outreach to congressional offices, local and state officials and stakeholders. A news release to media and posting information on social media are planned. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around May 15, FWS will publish a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2019-20 hunting season. This is the first step in the annual regulatory cycle. The FWS Regulations Committee will recommend the final frameworks at their October meeting. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 17 and 19 in Anchorage, Alaska, FWS Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan, DOI Deputy Chief of Staff Mike Argo, and others will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Attu at the Alaska Maritime NWR, the only WWII battle fought on U.S. soil. Planned outreach includes a regional news release, web postings and social media, as well as targeted outreach to local media.

Between May 20-25, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposed rule and open a 30-day public comment period on the 2018-19 Refuge-Specific Hunting and Sport Fishing

Regulations. The proposed rule would open up to 30 various national wildlife refuges to hunting and/or sport fishing for the first time and expand hunting and fishing opportunities at others. Outreach is planned to include a national news release when the *Federal Register* notice is published and notifications to members of Congress in affected districts, with some stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 21-25, FWS will host 28 youth from around the country, part of the Career Discovery Internship Program (CDIP), in Philadelphia at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, for a week of training before they head to various field stations for summer internships. CDIP is FWS' award winning program in partnership with the Student Conservation Association, that introduces culturally and ethnically diverse youth into the field of conservation. (05/09/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 29-31, 13 Hispanic Access Foundation (HAF) interns will be attending orientation in DC to prepare for their summer positions with FWS in the Northeast Region, Midwest Region and HQ. The Hispanic Access Foundation is a non-profit organization that helps connect Hispanic communities with civic engagement. FWS is working with HAF to employ Hispanic youth through internships. (05/09/2018)

#### National Park Service

On May 11, Glacier National Park expects to have a signed Finding of No Significant Impact for the Sperry Chalet Next 100 Years Project. The park expects to issue a press release on May 13 with this update. The EA will identify the NPS' preferred alternative, which is to use existing remnant walls to rebuild the structure, replicating and retaining as many historic character features as is practicable, and achieving some modernization in design. (Updated 05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** By May 15, the NPS expects to release a prospectus for five concession contracts to provide cruise ship services at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Two of the contracts are set aside for the two historic operators identified through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) legislation. Cruise ship services contracts have been awarded since 1980 on a 10 year basis. New contract terms are similar to previous contracts, shaped in accordance with both Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve-specific legislation and NPS law and policy. Contracts will be awarded by late October, 2019. The prospectus is in DOI review. (Updated 5/9/2018)

On May 15, Rock Creek Park will host a public meeting at the Silver Spring Library to share information about the ongoing rehabilitation of Beach Drive. Staff from the Federal Highway Administration, the DC Department of Transportation, DC Water, and the NPS National Capital Region will discuss the current status and the upcoming work on Segment 4 of the project. Segment 4 is the final part of the project and is expected to be finalized in Fall 2019. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** Between approximately May 15 - June 15, a section of an off-road vehicle (ORV) route near Cape Point at Cape Hatteras National Seashore may close if nearby nesting piping plover and American oystercatcher eggs hatch. Cape Point, a popular fishing and shelling location that

became known as "Shelly Island" during summer 2017, closes temporarily almost every summer through the end of August to allow for several species of shorebirds to complete nesting. Although Cape Point may close temporarily, the Seashore expects that the majority of ORV routes — more than 20 miles — will be accessible. (5/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** From May 15-29, Rock Creek Park will issue a prospectus and begin accepting proposals from vendors to provide equestrian and related services at the park's horse center in Washington D.C. under a new 10-year concession contract. Services sought include private horse boarding, therapeutic riding programs, instructional camps, guided trail rides and riding lessons. The closing date for proposals will be late June. (Updated 5/9/2018)

On May 15-16, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council will hold a public meeting in Jamestown, Virginia. This will be the Council's final meeting since trail advisory councils are only authorized for 10 years under the National Trails System Act. Deputy Director Dan Smith plans to attend the first day. (04/12/18)

**[NEW]** On May 16, Manassas National Battlefield Park will host a consulting parties meeting to discuss the process for interring the remains of two Union soldiers that were recently discovered at the park. The agencies and stakeholders include the U.S. Army, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. (5/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** By May 18, it is anticipated that the Secretary of the Interior will appointment three new members to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Review Committee, a Federal Advisory committee. Each nominee was selected based on his or her experience and pursuant to the requirements in the enabling legislation. The Review Committee monitors and reviews repatriation activities, makes recommendations to the Secretary, and reports annually to Congress on the implementation of the Act. (Updated 5/9/2018)

By May 18, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) expects to issue the Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Muir Woods National Monument Salmon Habitat Enhancement and Bridge Replacement Project. The selected alternative will restore aquatic habitat degraded by riprap that was placed along the creek banks in the 1930s and replace four deteriorated pedestrian bridges that were installed in the 1990s. The project implements part of the 2014 General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. The projects themselves are not expected to be controversial, but there is public interest in ensuring that NPS schedules its projects to reduce cumulative impacts from planned construction work in the area by the Marin County Department of Public Works and the Federal Highways Works Administration. (04/25/18)

**[NEW]** On May 19, Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial (Ohio) will reopen the memorial to the public following a yearlong closure for restoration and repairs, reducing the park's deferred maintenance obligation by more than \$4 million. The projects included repointing the exterior masonry, removing efflorescence, replacing broken interior wall tile, and rehabilitating five exterior bronze doors. These deferred maintenance projects were paid for with entrance fee revenue and Line Item Construction funding. The park will hold a ribbon cutting event with several elected officials or their staff in attendance. (5/9/2018)

Between May 19 - 23, the NPS will participate in the largest travel industry trade show in the country, IPW, in Denver, Colorado. The show focuses on international travel to the United States. The NPS has scheduled appointments with 100+ international tour operators to discuss outdoor recreation opportunities on park lands, policy, regulatory requirements, fees, and other issues. The NPS participates alongside a team of Federal agencies including DOI, FWS, BLM, BIA, Commerce Department, State Department, that engage with the tourism sector. DOI Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs will also be participating. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 19, Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve will be celebrating Armed Forces Day in coordination with volunteers from The Mission Continues and National Parks Conservation Association. This one day event will focus on repairing portions of the popular Bluff Trail, which receives more than 500,000 hikers per year and also serves as a segment of the Pacific Northwest Trail. (5/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On or about May 21, Saguaro National Park will close a two week public comment period for an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze impacts of the continued traditional harvesting of Saguaro Fruit and Cholla Buds by the Tohono O'odham Nation within Park boundaries. This EA is a requirement of the August 2016 NPS rule, Gathering of Certain Plants by Federally Recognized Indian Tribes for Traditional Purposes (36 CFR 2.6), to establish a management framework for tribes to gather certain plant parts within NPS units for traditional purposes. The harvesting of Saguaro Fruit and Cholla Buds is a long standing tradition of the tribal members. (Updated 5/9/2018)

On May 21, Mount Rainier National Park will issue a news release announcing the availability of the Paradise Cellular Environmental Assessment (EA) Finding of No Significant Impact. The selected action will issue right-of-way permits to Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile, and provide conditional approval of AT&T's proposal to co-locate wireless communication facilities in the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise. The cellular facilities will be concealed in the attic of the visitor center and will not involve the construction of towers. The NPS received 893 comments on the EA, with approximately 70% opposed to the service. Comments opposed to the proposal emphasized the protection of national parks and wildernesses from wireless signals, with many assuming a cell tower would be constructed. Those in favor emphasized safety, and the benefits of improved communication including convenience, coordination, education, and timely notification of hazards. The NPS determined that cellular service at Paradise will benefit the public by improving communication between the NPS and the public, and between park visitors, in the most intensely used and developed district of the park. (04/25/2018)

On May 22, pending an updated wage determination from Department of Labor (DOL), Golden Gate National Recreation Area's General Agreement and associated draft leases for the long-term use of Pier 31 ½ as the Alcatraz ferry embarkation site will be considered by the San Francisco Port Commission for approval. This item was before the commission on February 27; however, commissioners continued the vote in response to concerns raised by labor unions about the concession contract DOL wage determination and other labor-related issues. Concurrently the NPS is working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Sausalito (with notification to Congressman Jared Huffman's office (D-2-CA)) summarizing common

understandings related to the potential expansion of ferry passenger service to Fort Baker described in the Alcatraz Island Passenger Ferry Service Prospectus. [Prospectus link](#) (Updated 5/2/2018)

May 23 is the final day for internal review comments on the Yuma Crossing Quartermaster Depot Reconnaissance Survey. The NPS has prepared this reconnaissance survey at the request of Senator John McCain to evaluate the Yuma Quartermaster Depot in Yuma, Arizona as a potential unit of the National Park System. The purpose of a reconnaissance survey is to provide a preliminary evaluation of a resource and to recommend whether an authorization for a Special Resource Study fully evaluating the resource should be considered by the U.S. Congress. This reconnaissance survey report discusses national significance and presents preliminary findings on suitability, feasibility, and the need for direct NPS management. Additionally, in response to a special request from Senator McCain, the survey also provides a preliminary analysis of the interpretive approach outlined in a master plan prepared by the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area. (5/2/2018)

On May 23, the public comment period will close on Antietam National Battlefield's Visitor Access and Circulation Plan/Environmental Assessment (Plan/EA). The purpose of the Plan/EA is to evaluate the implementation of strategies to improve visitor access and circulation at the park. This Plan/EA also serves as an amendment to the 1992 Antietam National Battlefield General Management Plan, taking into account newly acquired lands not previously considered in the general management plan and evolving management decisions regarding the visitor center and several Battlefield tour roads. <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ANTICirculationPlan> (Updated 04/25/2018)

On May 25, public comments for the National Mall and Memorial Parks' renewal of two National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits are due to the EPA. The permit for the World War II Memorial allows for stormwater discharge from the memorial pools and fountains into the Tidal Basin; the permit for the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool allows for the discharge of treated water to and from the Tidal Basin. If no substantive comments are received by the EPA (and none are expected), the permits will go into effect by June 24. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** By May 25, a spending plan will be developed and submitted to the Department for approval for the new Historic Preservation Fund grant program subgrant program (yet to be named). Five million in physical preservation funding was passed as part of the FY 2018 budget to grant "block grant" funding to organizations that will subgrant funding to historic properties of national, State, and local significance listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Development of a spending plan was mandated in the appropriations language. Preservation partners may have questions about the stage of development of this program. (Updated 5/9/2018)

By May 26, pending Departmental approval, the NPS will publish a Federal Register notice announcing that the Department has authorized the preparation of a World Heritage nomination for the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio. With nine component properties including those that form Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, and others managed by the State of Ohio, this series of geometric mounds is approximately 2,000 years old. The nomination file, which will take more than a year to draft, will be developed by local proponents in Ohio with

guidance from the NPS. Upon completion and review, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks will determine whether the nomination will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee. (Updated 04/18/18).

On May 26, Lassen Volcanic National Park will close its public comment period on alternatives for a Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA). The plan will provide a comprehensive strategy to ensure the preservation and enhancement of wilderness character in the park's designated wilderness and backcountry areas. The proposed action seeks to maintain unconfined recreational use while identifying and preserving resource values that the public seeks in this setting. (Updated 5/2/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

On or around May 31, FWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) plan to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to revise the regulations pertaining to interagency cooperation pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 402) and the procedures for listing of species and designation of critical habitat pursuant to section 4 of the Act (50 CFR 424). FWS will also propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NMFS' current practice. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. The rules are currently undergoing interagency review through OMB-OIRA. (04/25/2018)

*[NEW]* In late May, FWS is providing for public inspection the final supplemental environmental impact statement on the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's request to amend its 2010 Forested State Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and incidental take permit. The amendment would authorize additional incidental take of the threatened grizzly bear, Canada lynx, bull trout and unlisted westslope cutthroat trout associated with forest management on 81,416 acres proposed to be added to the HCP. Outreach is planned and includes a regional news release and congressional/stakeholder notifications. (05/09/2018)

In late May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to delist the Hidden Lake bluecurls, a plant in California, due to recovery. FWS does not expect opposition to the delisting. Primary stakeholders include California Department of Parks and Recreation Mount San Jacinto State Park. Planned outreach will include a national news release and notifications to stakeholders and members of Congress. A communications plan has been shared with DOI Comms. (Updated 05/02/2018)

In late May, FWS will send a news release summarizing cross-fostering efforts of Mexican wolf pups to media and stakeholders. Typically FWS will not announce until a successful cross-foster event is completed. Last year, two pups were flown in but the den in the wild could not be located. On April 18, four 10-day old Mexican wolf pups were removed from a captive litter at

the Endangered Wolf Center in Eureka, Missouri and flown to Arizona. Two were inserted into a wild wolf pack's den in Arizona, and two were inserted into a wild den in New Mexico. The Interagency Field Team will monitor the recipient packs through the summer to determine the success of these cross-fostering actions. FWS will continue to seek cross-fostering opportunities during the month of May. The Mexican wolf recovery team will only have a very short time (72 - 48 hours) to get a cross-foster mission lined up for execution. Select reporters will be invited to attend the event. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around June 1, FWS plans to publish in the *Federal Register* the final 2018-19 hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds. FWS annually prescribes frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the number of birds that may be taken and possessed in hunting seasons. These frameworks are necessary to allow state selections of seasons and limits and to allow recreational harvest at levels compatible with population and habitat conditions. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

On or around June 1, the FWS anticipates the draft supplemental environmental impact statement for expanded public access to Rattlesnake Mountain on Hanford Reach National Monument, in Washington state, will be available for public review and comment. This is part of the required regulatory processes to provide public access to Rattlesnake Mountain, consistent with a mandate in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA; P.L. 113-291). Section 3081 of the NDAA states "the Secretary of the Interior shall provide public access to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain for educational, recreational, historical, scientific, cultural, and other purposes, including (1) motor vehicle access; and (2) pedestrian and other non-motorized access." The FWS established a Tribal Working Group with four local tribes and held public scoping meetings to address cultural concerns and to work through the process of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The FWS is addressing National Environmental Policy Act compliance by drafting a supplement to the 2008 Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Monument. Expanded public access will be controversial with tribes. FWS will continue outreach efforts to the tribes, media, and the public. A local news release is planned to alert the public that comment period is open. (Updated 03/28/2018)

On or around June 1, pending approval by the Department, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a Notice of Intent to prepare a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) addressing the potential impacts from four similar wind energy project habitat conservation plans in Hawaii. The HCPs were submitted to the Service in support of requests for permits authorizing the take of endangered or threatened species, under the Endangered Species Act. Due to similarities in the geography, impact, covered species, and proposed mitigation measures between these four wind energy projects the Service has determined that a combined PEIS is the most efficient and comprehensive approach for considering the cumulative impacts of these actions on the human environment. When the PEIS publishes, outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, with targeted stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On June 1 and 2, representatives from FWS, U.S. Forest Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and other partners will celebrate the proposal to delist Kirtland's warbler.

The current Kirtland's warbler population is estimated to be over 2,000 pairs, more than double the recovery goal. The Kirtland's warbler population continues to grow and has exceeded recovery goals for the past 16 years. FWS is accepting comments on the proposal through July 11. (04/25/2018)

On or around June 8, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to list five Sri Lankan tarantula species as endangered. The species are in decline due to ongoing habitat loss, degradation, and the cumulative effects of this and other threat factors. This action is not expected to be controversial. Planned outreach will include web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On or around June 14, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the Colorado butterfly plant due to recovery. This species is located in Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming. This action is not expected to be opposed. Outreach plans include a national news release, and an if-asked FAQs. Key stakeholders include private landowners, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and the BLM. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* an action designating critical habitat for three plant species on Hawaii island and is correcting the maps for existing designations for an additional four species. FWS intends to exclude lands owned or managed by the Queen Liliuokalani Trust, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and other private landowners under 4(b)(2) of the Act. This action is not controversial. Interested stakeholders include the state of Hawaii and multiple state agencies, the county of Hawaii and various private landowners. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders mentioned above. (Updated 04/18/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In response to a petition to delist the species, on or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to reclassify the American burying beetle from an endangered species to a threatened species. While the primary threats to the species have been ameliorated, ongoing threats remain. FWS will also propose a rule under section 4(d) tailoring prohibitions to those most likely to harm the American burying beetle and its habitats. The American burying beetle currently occurs in Arkansas, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Texas. This finding will likely be opposed by the Center for Biological Diversity and Center for American Burying Beetle Conservation. It is also likely to be opposed by the petitioners, American Stewards of Liberty, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Dr. Steven W. Carothers, as they petitioned us to delist, not downlist the species. Outreach plans include a regional news release and congressional notifications. A communications plan has been drafted and will be shared with the appropriate offices. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed rule to list the hyacinth macaw as threatened. To address concerns raised by the pet trade industry, FWS is including a 4(d) rule that will allow for the import and export of parrots that meet certain criteria, as well as interstate commerce in this species without a permit. Stakeholders include the bird breeding community, Conservation International, The Nature



Conservancy, and World Wildlife Fund. Planned outreach will include a national news release and web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed reclassification of the southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou (endangered) by defining the entire Southern Mountain Caribou population as a distinct population segment (DPS) and listing it as endangered. In 2012, FWS designated critical habitat for the southern Selkirk Mountains population, which will remain unchanged. Several non-governmental organizations (International Fund for Wildlife, Kettle Range Conservation Group, Selkirk Conservation Alliance, Kootenai Environmental Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity, Idaho Conservation League) will likely view our final determination favorably. The Pacific Legal Foundation (and Bonner County as represented by PLF) is likely to challenge the determination. The State of Idaho may view the listing of the DPS and endangered determination unfavorably. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls. (Updated 05/09/2018)

**[NEW]** On or around June 22, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposed revision of the existing NEP designation of red wolves in North Carolina under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. FWS anticipates opposition from North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) (it has officially requested the termination of this NEP), the North Carolina Farm Bureau, and most private landowners with wolves using their property. Although national and local environmental groups will support the continuation of a NEP in North Carolina, they will likely oppose any alternative short of full protections under the Act and the proposed reduction in the size of the NEP. Interested stakeholders other than NCWRC include Defenders of Wildlife, the Red Wolf Coalition, Red Wolf Species Survival Plan cooperators, and other non-governmental organizations that support red wolf conservation. Some of these stakeholders have challenged the current red wolf program in court, and it is important to our defense of that case that we meet the target *Federal Register* date with this notice, as it will support an argument that the actions being challenged are about to be mooted out by this action. Outreach includes a news release, social media, emails and phone calls. (05/09/2018)

**[NEW]** On or around June 29, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to designate a nonessential experimental population of California condor in northern California and Oregon to contribute to meeting recovery goals for the species. This action is being taken in concert with the National Park Service and the Yurok Tribe in support of recovery goals for the condors. The primary state agencies, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and California Department of Parks and Recreation, have expressed interest in condor recovery through participation in an MOU. There is a possibility that there may be some localized opposition to condor reintroduction in the area, but we do not foresee concerted opposition given California's action banning the use of lead ammunition effective in 2019. FWS is considering how to address potential conflicts with logging, transmission lines, and wind turbines through the 10(j) rule. Planned outreach will include a regional news release and notification to stakeholders, tribes and members of Congress. Target date for submitting to the *Federal Register* is June 29, 2018. (05/09/2018)

[UPDATE] On or around June 29, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final listing determination for the meltwater lednian stonefly and the western glacier stonefly, located in Montana and Wyoming. Interested stakeholders include WildEarth Guardians, Xerces Society, Center for Biological Diversity and the states of Montana and Wyoming. The State of Wyoming has expressed opposition to the listing. Planned outreach will include a regional news release, web updates, and congressional/stakeholder notifications. (Updated 05/09/2018)

[UPDATE] This summer, FWS in partnership with Arizona Game and Fish Department will propose expanding the black-footed ferret 10(j) designation to include all current and historical ferret habitat in Arizona. The 1996 Arizona 10(j) area was limited to the Aubrey Valley Experimental Population Area (AVEPA); successful reintroductions and subsequent population expansions has resulted in ferrets venturing outside of the AVEPA (as fully protected status). FWS consultation with affected tribes has been initiated. FWS will coordinate with AGFD to best approach and inform Arizona grassland residents and industry (livestock) groups. Communication planning will be conducted. (Updated 05/09/2018)

### National Park Service

On or after May 28, the Tule Lake Unit of the WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument will open a 30-day public comment period on the Tule Lake Jail Restoration Project Environmental Assessment. The proposed action would fully restore the exterior of the building, remove the freestanding shed and chain-link fence, restore or rehabilitate the jail interior, and would also improve accessibility to and within the building. (05/02/2018)

On May 29, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a competitive business opportunity to establish a waterfront community center at the Fort Baker Historic Boat Shop and Marina as an affordable recreational and gathering place. The purpose of the RFQ is to identify both private- and public-sector entities interested in operating the facility, which is currently operated by the U.S. Air Force as a military recreation facility open to the public. The NPS is seeking a long-term lease that will enable an offeror to make necessary investments in historic rehabilitation of deteriorating facilities, and the provision of public services and programs at the site. The park has kept the USAF informed throughout the lead up to this announcement, and they have express interest in participating in the RFQ process. (Updated 04/25/18).

On or after May 29, the NPS will release the Tule Lake Unit of World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the public. The FWS co-manages two of three parcels that comprise the Tule Lake Unit, and the FWS has concurred with issuing the FONSI. The selected action outlines the long-term management and development for the unit established in May 2008 by President Bush. (04/25/2018)

[UPDATE] The May 30 kickoff event of the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission at Independence National Historical Park has been postponed. It may be rescheduled for early October. (Updated 05/09/2018)

By May 30, USDA APHIS will complete data analysis that will inform a schedule for bison transfer to the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Ft. Peck, Montana. On April 5, Yellowstone National Park and the Deputy Administrator of USDA APHIS discussed several key issues related to the park's proposed bison quarantine program. This was follow-up to a February 2018 meeting, convened and facilitated by the Secretary of the Interior, between DOI, NPS, USDA APHIS, Ft. Peck tribal leadership, and the State of Montana. Substantive progress was confirmed on several issues including the structure and signators for agreements on quarantine facility operations, the future transfer of brucellosis-free bison to the Ft. Peck reservation, and USDA APHIS certification of the park bison quarantine facility. Yellowstone bison management and quarantine receive national public interest and media coverage. (Updated 04/18/18)

[UPDATE] On May 31, the open period to submit offers will close on a prospectus for multiple concession contracts for charter vessel services in Glacier Bay National Park (GLBA). While the park previously authorized charter vessel services under both concession contracts and Commercial Use Authorizations (CUA), it seeks to manage this service under a single and unified authorization tool to increase consistency and fairness among operators. Beginning in 2019, GLBA will cease offering charter vessel or sportfishing CUAs in the national park area and will solely authorize these services under concession contracts. As regulations dictate a vessel quota on specific marine areas of GLBA during the prime season, the new contracts implement a vessel use day cap of 552 days in Glacier Bay from June 1 through August 31. In this prospectus, the park also intends to issue a cap on vessel use days for Outer Park Waters, which is based on the highest level of activity in the last decade plus 10% for future growth. GLBA has not predetermined an exact number of contracts to award. Rather, each offeror will indicate its desired level of vessel use days and contracts will be awarded until the full allocation is met. On February 26, GLBA issued the prospectus; while the prospectus is expected to produce sizable public interest, the plan is not considered to be controversial. (Updated 5/9/2018)

On or before June 1, the Missouri Department of Agriculture will issue its findings relative to the improper use of herbicides by a private contractor to the NPS on NPS lands at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. The over application occurred in the Summer and Fall of 2016 and its effect became evident in the Spring of 2017. Some 170 trees show signs of mortality and stress. The contractor has been cooperative to date and has indicated willingness to make restitution for damages. The NPS is working to evaluate the best approach to restore resources. (Updated 05/02/2018)

[NEW] By June 1, 2018, Denali National Park and Preserve will publish the Denali Long Range Transportation Plan. The plan evaluates the current conditions of transportation, considers possible future scenarios, and presents future desired conditions and possible funding strategies. It is a document that presents the park's vision for the next 20 years as it evaluates multiple aspects of the its transportation system ranging from bus transit to airstrips and trail connectivity, with particular attention given to the Denali Park Road. (5/9/2018)

Between June 1-15, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (pending Departmental approval of NOA) expects to issue a Record of Decision for the Vista Grande Drainage Basin Improvement

Project Environmental Impact Report /Environmental Impact Statement prepared in cooperation with the City of Daly City, California. This project would allow Daly City to take project actions at Fort Funston to address storm-related flooding in the Vista Grande Drainage Basin. [PEPC link](#) (04/04/18).

**[NEW]** On June 1, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will implement a new \$10 permit fee for anchoring vessels overnight in Aquatic Park Cove. The permit process will use Recreation.gov, and will provide boaters an additional convenient way to obtain information about anchoring-out rules and regulations, and reserve a mooring in advance of their visit to the park. The implementation had been delayed due to complications involving a criminal case against a local mariner. (5/9/2018)

On June 2, construction crews will begin temporary stabilization repairs on Arlington Memorial Bridge. The project start was delayed to accommodate the Rolling Thunder special event over Memorial Day weekend. This repair work is designed to keep the bridge open to traffic during its full rehabilitation (beginning in fall 2018). Work crews will repair bridge deck supports in the drawbridge span and the road deck in the westbound roadway. This work will require intermittent single lane closures on the bridge beginning after Memorial Day weekend. (Updated 04/11/18).

**[NEW]** On June 4, Yosemite National Park will close its public scoping period for the Big Oak Flat Visitor Contact Station and Emergency Services Facilities Project. The purpose of this project is to improve the overall visitor experience, improve restroom facilities to reduce wait times, parking facilities, and visitor safety and wayfinding signage. It will also increase accessibility and correct long-standing building maintenance issues. (5/9/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 6, Death Valley National Park will hold a reopening and ribbon-cutting event to celebrate the completion of the Dantes View rehabilitation project. The Fund for People in Parks and Death Valley Natural History Association donated half of the construction cost. (5/9/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 7, the 30-day public scoping period for an Invasive Vegetation Management Plan/Environmental Assessment at Grand Teton National Park will close. The purpose of the planning effort is to develop a successful strategy to prevent additional establishment and spread of invasive plant species and to restore native plant communities through prevention, control and restoration. (5/9/2018)

**[NEW]** By June 11, the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places must either approve the resubmitted listing of the Eastmoreland Historic District (EHD) or determine the property eligible for listing. On April 26, 2018, the Keeper received a resubmitted copy of the listing from the Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The nomination had originally been received by the Keeper on May 18, 2017; it was returned to the SHPO on June 30, 2017, for correction of a prejudicial procedural error related to private property ownership and the number and validity of objections to the proposed listing. The EHD nomination is highly contentious locally; both support for and against the proposed listing is roughly evenly divided. If a majority of private owners object to listing, the district cannot be listed *per se*; it can only be determined eligible for listing by the Keeper. Per the State Statute, properties **listed** in the National Register

are subject to local regulation with respect to the demolition or relocation of any historic buildings thereon. Per the NR Program regulations, each private owner is allowed one objection vote regardless of whether it is for multiple properties or a portion of one property within the district. In order to prevent the EHD listing, at least four private property owners have each sought to increase the numerical value of their objections by dividing their property ownership into 1000 revocable trusts (i.e. a total of 4000 revocable trusts). The Keeper is currently reviewing the validity of this approach with the Solicitor's Office. (5/9/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 13, Channel Islands National Park anticipates issuing a joint news release with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians announcing the transfer of human remains to the tribe that have been undergoing Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) review under 43 CFR 10.7 (Disposition of unclaimed human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony). **(Embargoed until public announcement)** (5/9/2018)

On June 14, the U.S. Mint will release the America the Beautiful Quarters Program coin honoring Voyageurs National Park. A ceremony will be held in International Falls, Minnesota. (04/04/18).

On June 15, Yosemite National Park's Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias will reopen to the public, following a 3-year \$40 million project funded through the NPS and Yosemite Conservancy matching funds. A new parking lot and welcome center has been constructed at the South Entrance, a shuttle bus will take visitors to the big trees, a handicap accessible boardwalk has been constructed, trails have been improved, and new restrooms have been installed. The dedication ceremony to mark the completion of the project is slated for June 14. <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/mariposagrove.htm> (03/07/18)

On June 18, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park will host King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain for a tour of Mission San Jose. The City of San Antonio Office of International Relations is coordinating the park tour as part of a three-day visit by the royal family to commemorate the Tri-centennial of the founding of San Antonio, Texas, as a Spanish mission in 1718. A public announcement about the visit will be made at a later date. Park employees involved in the planning effort have signed a modified confidentiality agreement (reviewed by our solicitor) with the City of San Antonio to coordinate planning efforts and keep the visit confidential. **(Close Hold)** (05/02/2018)

On June 26, the Acadia National Park Draft Transportation Plan and EIS public comment period will close. The comment period is open concurrently with the published EPA Notice of Availability. Public comment will be received through the PEPC website, standard mail, and during Open House events. Press interest in this public comment period is expected to be very high. The communication plan has been shared with NPS Comms. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Until June 30, State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices may apply for the remaining funding from the FY 2018 Annual HPF grants that is noticed on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). (Updated 5/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In June, the Old Santa Fe Trail Office's stucco repair and rehabilitation project for the historic building will begin and will be closed to the public during construction. NPS staff currently working in the Old Santa Fe Trail Building will temporarily relocate to another office space in Santa Fe while the repairs take place. Historic artifacts and museum archives from the building have also been temporarily relocated and stored in appropriate facilities. The work is scheduled to take 12-18 months to complete. (Updated 5/9/2018)

Expected to last through June or the end of the dry season, Burnett Oil Company will continue seismic operation within Big Cypress National Preserve. The Nobles Grade 3D Seismic Survey, a proposal that the National Park Service and Burnett examined and refined for more than two years before it was approved in May 2016, originally began in March of 2017 and suspended operations by June 2, 2017, when conditions became too wet to continue. Burnett is using a vibroseis technique to acquire geologic data to assess the potential for oil drilling within Big Cypress National Preserve. It is expected the exploration will continue this year through the south Florida dry season which should end by June 2018. Work began on March 29. (Updated 04/11/18).

July 3 is the deadline for the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to submit a nomination to the Keeper of the Ch'u'itnu Historic District Traditional Cultural Property nomination submitted by the Native Village of Tyonek (NVT). On April 4, 2018, the Alaska Historical Commission (Commission) approved the nomination submitted by the NVT, a federally recognized tribe that has lived within the proposed district for many generations. The District encompasses ca. 109,000 acres of land within Alaska's Ch'u'tnu River watershed approximately 90 miles west of Anchorage. The nomination is opposed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources as well as some private organizations/commercial entities. An accord can only be submitted to the Keeper by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and only after it has been reviewed by the Alaska Historical Commission. It is the Keeper's understanding that despite approval of the nomination by the Commission, the SHPO remains strongly opposed to it. Failure of the SHPO to meet the 90 day/ July 3 deadline will likely result in the filing of a third appeal by NVT directly to the Keeper to review the nomination and list the property in the NR. (04/18/18)

By July 15, Olympic National Park's 2017 Natural Resource Condition Assessment (NRCA) will be published as a National Park Service Resource Report. This report is jointly funded by the USGS and the NPS NRCA Program. A joint NPS-USGS news release will be issued announcing the report. (Updated 5/2/2018)

Between July 19-31, the American Indian Movement (AIM) will hold its 27th annual Sundance at Pipestone National Monument. The Sundance is the central sacred ceremony for the Lakota Tribes. On April 2, the NPS received a proposal from AIM to improve the grounds used for the Sundance. The NPS began working through the compliance process for the proposed improvements and has introduced possible alternatives to meet AIM's needs. (Updated 04/11/18).

**[UPDATE]** By July 30, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Scotty's Castle Flood Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment and FONSI. This document analyzes repair

work planned for historic structures, the cultural landscape, utilities, parking, and walkways to recover from damage from a flash flood in October 2015. The historic district is scheduled to reopen to the public in 2020. PEPC link (Updated 5/9/2018)

By August 2018, the NPS and the National Park Foundation (NPF) will complete their joint Impact Investment Study. The Impact Investing Study is being funded by the NPF and will analyze how federal agencies have developed third-party financed infrastructure construction, operations, revitalization, and recapitalization programs over the past 20 years. The study will also identify potential new or modified authorities or policies required to implement alternative financing strategies to help the NPS move forward with the construction, repair, and ongoing maintenance of bureau infrastructure. (03/14/18).

[UPDATE] In August 2018, at Death Valley National Park, reconstruction work is scheduled to start and be completed by May 2019 that will allow reopening of the northeast entrance to the park and restore public access to Scotty's Castle after massive damage from flooding in October 2015. Construction dates will be confirmed after release of the final Bonnie Clare Road Reconstruction Environmental Assessment and FONSI. PEPC link (Updated 5/9/2018)

Through September 20, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is undertaking a paving project that will result in single-lane closures and traffic delays intermittently between the Newfound Gap area south to the park boundary at Cherokee, North Carolina. The Federal Highway Administration awarded the \$3 million paving contract to Estes Brothers Construction. Roadwork will include the application of a thin lift pavement overlay. (5/2/2018)

[UPDATE] Through September 30, the Sitka Tribe of Alaska will take over operations of the interpretation program at Sitka National Historical Park from the NPS. Under Title IV of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, the Sitka Tribe of Alaska submitted a request to compact (a tribal self-governance agreement) the interpretation and resource management programs at Sitka National Historical Park. An agreement for the second half of fiscal year 2018 was reached between both parties that is limited to portions of the interpretation program only for 2018. Congressional notification of this action closed on May 6, and the agreement went into effect May 7, 2018. (Updated 5/9/2018)

## Awareness

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[NEW] On April 26, the Denver Public School Board barred school-sanctioned field trips to Rocky Flats NWR, citing public health and safety concerns. Other school boards have imposed similar bans (Boulder Valley and Adams 14), or require approval by the school superintendent (St. Vrain Valley, Adams 12 Five Star, Westminster and Jefferson County) before field trips can be scheduled. On May 1, the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center and others filed a lawsuit that seeks to halt construction of trails and public access to the refuge until FWS completes and up-to-date National Environmental Policy Act analysis of potential environmental risks (current NEPA was completed in 2005). FWS is confident in the clean-up and remediation of Rocky Flats and defer to the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment and the

Environmental Protection Agency on matters related to public health and safety. FWS continues to seek a balance between meeting the desire of many members of the public for refuge access and addressing the concerns of local opposition groups. (05/09/2018)

**[NEW]** Analysis of fish collected in the Klamath River last week documented a 47 percent prevalence of infection in juvenile Chinook salmon from the parasite *Ceratonova shasta*, up from 10 percent the previous week. All infections were shown to be very light. Given the 20 percent threshold has been exceeded, dilution flows released from Iron Gate Dam on the Klamath River are imminent, as specified in the recent court ruling (see below) confirming the court's 2017 decision. The order specifies that the action shall not result in adverse impacts to listed suckers in Upper Klamath Lake. This action is not expected to affect the 10,500 acre-feet of water being provided to Klamath Project irrigators by PacificCorp, but will likely delay the irrigation start date to mid-June. (05/09/2018)

**[NEW]** On behalf of the Olin-McIntosh Site Trustee Council, FWS will issue a Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct a Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) at the Olin-McIntosh National Priority List Site in Washington County, Alabama, in mid-May. Trustees participating in the NRDA include the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Geological Survey of Alabama, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and FWS. The site is owned and operated by the Olin Corporation who is aware of the forthcoming NOI and has expressed an interest in continuing discussions regarding a cooperative NRDA. (05/09/2018)

**[UPDATE]** FWS is in the process of incorporating and addressing public comments into a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for a bald eagle incidental take permit issued to Garrett Construction Company, LLC ("Garrett") and will make a final permit decision by May 11. On February 6, FWS Region 6 Migratory Birds originally issued the permit, and on February 13, Front Range Nesting Bald Eagles Studies filed a Petition for Review of Agency Action, challenging certain actions associated with FWS' issuance of the Garrett permit and alleging that those actions violated the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act. On April 17, FWS informed the court that it was conducting additional analyses through an EA examining potential impacts of issuing a bald eagle incidental take permit to Garrett. On April 23, FWS suspended the February 6 permit and released a Draft EA for a seven-day public comment period. (Updated 05/09/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On April 20, staff from Sand Lake NWR responded to a large waterfowl die-off approximately six miles northeast of Ipswich, South Dakota. Two to three thousand waterfowl carcasses and sick and injured birds were discovered over a four-square mile area. Most of the affected waterfowl were snow geese, but Canada geese and ducks were also observed. Several birds were collected by the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) and the FWS staff and sent to the National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC) in Madison, Wisconsin for analysis. Three birds were necropsied on April 26 and they all had abnormalities consistent with avian cholera. The NWHC is still in the process of testing for avian influenza. South Dakota GFP conservation officers are monitoring the area for changes and there are no plans for collecting the remaining dead or dying birds. (Updated 05/09/2018)



## National Park Service

Media attention and pre-construction activities are ramping-up for the Mountain Valley Pipeline, which will cross the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Several protests are ongoing on private or other non-NPS lands. Specific construction dates are not yet set, but could begin as early as May or June on USFS lands (adjacent to Appalachian National Scenic Trail) and NPS lands (Blue Ridge Parkway). Media attention is not focused on the NPS at this time. The NPS Washington Office of Communications has the lead for any media inquiries. (Updated 4/25/2018)

**[NEW]** Contingent on adequate water levels, Zone 4 of the Stairsteps Unit within Big Cypress National Preserve will be closed to airboat access due to low water conditions. On May 3, low water level thresholds were observed and have persisted for the required two-week period. Preserve staff, in consultation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, implemented the closure and will monitor water levels to determine reopening. Zone 4, located within the southeast corner of the Preserve, is the only area within the Preserve that allows for backcountry access via airboat. (5/9/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (PDAS) John Tahsuda will be in the office May 14-16, on travel May 17-18 to present the commencement speech at Haskell University in Kansas.

Acting Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Director Darryl LaCounte will be in the office this week.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Director Tony Dearman will be in the office May 14-16. On May 16, he will testify at the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs oversight hearing. Following the hearing he will head to Whiteriver, Arizona, to attend the Theodore Roosevelt School's commencement ceremony May 17-18.

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management George Bearpaw will be in the office this week.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

On May 18, PDAS Tahsuda will be the keynote speaker at the Haskell Indian Nations University 2018 commencement in Lawrence, Kansas.

**[NEW]** The week of May 21, PDAS Tahsuda will be on travel with the Secretary as needed. May 23-24 will be the Tribal-Interior Budget Council (TIBC) meeting at the Washington Plaza Hotel in Washington, DC.

**[UPDATED]** Indian Affairs expects to have the Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing Tribal consultations on the DOI Reorganization ready for distribution during this period. The consultation series will kick off with a listening session at the NCAI meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, the week of June 4.

#### Bureau of Indian Affairs

**[NEW]** On May 14, the Cloud version of the BIA Office of Indian Services' case management system, Financial Assistance and Social Services – Case Management System (FASS-CMS), will launch. The launch will provide the BIA social service community with an improved case management system.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

**[UPDATED]** On May 16, BIE Director Dearman will testify at the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs oversight hearing on school safety in Indian Country.

May 17 is the deadline for comments and nominations in response to Federal Register notice published on April 17 on the Bureau of Indian Education Standards, Assessments, and Accountability System Negotiated Rulemaking Committee Establishment; Proposed Membership.

May 21 is the deadline for comments on the Bureau of Indian Affairs' proposed rule updating the regulation regarding when Indian students are eligible for benefits of education under the Johnson-O'Malley Act (JOM), per the Federal Register notice published on March 21, 2018. PDAS Tahsuda and BIE Director Dearman consulted with Navajo Nation at their request on April 25.

May 21-25, BIE will host a strategic planning meeting on Goals 4 through 6 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

May 22-23, a Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) Engineering faculty member will attend a NASA-NSF-NIFA Symposium in Washington, DC.

On May 25, SIPI will conduct focus groups of current students to determine the impact of online and evening/weekend course offerings on student enrollment patterns. This will provide the basis for a market study to determine the feasibility of future online and evening/weekend college.

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

On May 31, PDAS Tahsuda will host a Tribal consultation in Rapid City, South Dakota, on potential revisions to the fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR Part 151. A Dear Tribal Leader letter was distributed on May 1.

**[UPDATED]** On June 3, PDAS Tahsuda will host two listening sessions at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri, addressing the DOI reorganization and potential revisions to fee-to-trust regulations.

#### Bureau of Indian Affairs

**[UPDATED]** On May 31, BIA anticipates releasing the final guidance for Tribes on how to conduct background checks of foster care parents and employees under the Native American Children's Safety Act (NACSA). The guidance is currently in surname and must be issued by the statutory deadline of June 3.

**[UPDATED]** On June 5, BIA will host a listening session at the NCAI mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri, addressing law enforcement and court improvement issues.

June 30 is the deadline for written comments on whether and how to revise BIA's fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR 151, per the Dear Tribal Leader letter dated February 15, 2018.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

May 30-June 2, SIPI's IC-Mars project lead and four students will attend the TECHLAV Annual Meeting at North Carolina University AT&T in Greensboro, North Carolina.

**[UPDATED]** On June 3, BIE will host a joint listening session with U.S. Department of Education at the NCAI mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri, addressing set-aside funding for BIE.

July 1-7, the Native Youth Community Adaptation and Leadership Congress (NYCALC), an interagency effort of more than eight Federal agencies, will support 100 Tribal students in a program to promote conservation on Tribal lands and workforce development.

The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children originally scheduled for May 16-18 in Choctaw, Mississippi, is being rescheduled to a later date to ensure that sufficient advance notice is provided to Board members and the public.

Throughout June and July, BIE's Associate Deputy Director for Bureau-Operated Schools will host regional trainings for BIE-funded school staff and Title V staff:

- June 10-15 – Chemawa Indian School, Salem, Oregon
- June 17-22 – Bloomington, Minnesota
- June 24-29 – Cherokee, North Carolina
- July 9-13 – Flandreau, South Dakota
- July 16-20 – Phoenix, Arizona
- July 23-27 – Bismarck, North Dakota

## **Awareness**

### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs marked up and passed out of Committee, S. 2515, the PROGRESS Act, amending Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act for Self Determination and Self Governance to provide Tribes with greater flexibility to efficiently tailor, consolidate and administer federal programs for their communities.

**[NEW]** The Colorado School of Mines team sponsored by the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) will present the “net-zero” home the team designed for the Fond du Lac Tribe this week. The team was tasked to design a home that produced an equal amount of electrical energy to offset estimated usage. The Capstone Show features 60 teams and more that 370 Mines students presenting their projects.

### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

**[UPDATED]** There are currently 248 fires on trust land: three of these are over 100 acres, 29 are less than 100 but more than 1 acre, and the remaining 219 are contained at 0.8 acres or less. No Region has reported injuries. The largest fire was burning at the Fort Apache and San Carlos agencies. The Rattlesnake Fire is approximately 26,026 acres and 63% contained. Road and area closures are in effect.

A proposed rule to revise regulations addressing rights-of-way on Indian land (25 CFR 169) to exempt Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments from bonding and security requirements is in surname and is expected to be ready for publication before the end of May.

**[UPDATED]** Fee-to-Trust Completed Cases: For the time period of April 25 to May 2, 2018, BIA completed six land acquisition cases, taking a total of 235.59 acres into trust for four Tribes. To date for calendar year 2018, 109 cases have been completed totaling approximately 8,168 acres. Since 2009, a total of approximately 662,144 acres have been conveyed into trust.

### **Bureau of Indian Education**

**[NEW]** On May 14-15, the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM will host an information gathering session to discuss the priorities of Indian Country for the 2018 Farm Bill. USDA Secretary Perdue will attend.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY INSULAR AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel (May 13 – May 19, 2018)**

AS Domenech has no planned travel.

Office of Insular Affairs Director Pula has no planned travel.

Office of International Affairs Director Senhadji has no planned travel.

Oceans Program Coordinator Johnson has no planned travel.

#### Insular Affairs

**Meeting with Congresswoman Bordallo:** On May 15, ASDomenech will meet with Guam Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo on a variety of issues concerning Guam.

**FY2018 Grant Funding Application Review:** Throughout the month of May, OIA is reviewing grant applications under the Technical Assistance program for FY2018 funding.

**FEMA RSFLG MEETING:** On May 15, AS Domenech will attend the bi-weekly FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group meeting.

#### International Affairs

**NAFTA 2.0: [UPDATE]** As negotiations continue, INT Policy Division staff continue to coordinate DOI input into interagency review of negotiating positions as requested by USTR, including environmental, water and indigenous issues relevant for DOI, under the direction of the Deputy Secretary and ASIIA. In addition, INT is following up with ASIIA, DAS ASLM and the Energy Counselor regarding negotiations associated with Investor-State Dispute Settlement.

**Northern Rangelands Trust Law Enforcement Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is coordinating a technical exchange May 12-June 1 between two law enforcement officers from the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) and Yellowstone National Park. The NRT officers will be joining National Park staff during the seasonal law enforcement officers training. This exchange will provide field training on interoperability and law enforcement coordination. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds this work.

**Combating Wildlife Trafficking Strategic Planning in Kenya:** DOI-ITAP is supporting a two person team -- consisting of a USGS employee and a retiree from the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement -- to travel to Kenya May 12-24 to help develop a mission strategy to combat wildlife trafficking in Kenya as specified in the END Act. The team will hold meetings with representatives from the U.S. Government and Kenyan partners to map counter wildlife trafficking activities being carried out in Kenya. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds this work.

**Joint Forum on Environmental Cooperation in Morocco:** DOI-ITAP's Morocco Project Manager will travel to Rabat, Morocco in mid May to attend high level working group meetings, in which counterparts from the U.S. and Morocco will discuss environmental cooperation goals and activities. The U.S. Department of State funds this work.

**Development of a Legal Office to support Environmental Laws in Cambodia:** A team of DOI experts will travel to Cambodia May 16-24 to assist Cambodia's Ministry of Environment develop a legal office that will provide guidance and enforcement for a variety of current

environmental laws and a comprehensive environmental proposal recently submitted for government approval. This effort is taking place under the Smart Infrastructure for the Mekong (SIM) program and follows up on previous assistance in drafting the proposed environmental legislation. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds this work.

**Event Planning in Indonesia:** DOI-ITAP will implement an event planning workshop for the staff of the the Coral Triangle Initiative Regional Secretariat based in Manado, Indonesia May 17-19. This workshop will be led by two professional event organizers and will be tailored to the specific event-planning needs and challenges faced by the Regional Secretariat. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

**Iceland Secretarial Meeting Request and Whaling Activities: [UPDATE]** At the request of the Embassy of Iceland, Iceland's Ambassador is scheduled to meet with the Secretary on May 17 to seek decertification under the Pelly Amendment, which could lead to changes in their diplomatic status associated with Iceland's whaling activities (DOI certified in 2014 that Iceland was diminishing the effectiveness of CITES due to the conduct of trade in whale meat by Icelandic nationals). INT is coordinating with FWS and the State Department to develop briefing materials for the meeting.

**Deputy Secretary Meeting with Canada:** On May 18, the Deputy Secretary will meet with the Canadian Deputy Minister for Environment and Climate Change. Canada requested this introductory meeting between direct counterparts. Likely discussion topics will include cooperation on wildlife protection and protected areas. The Deputy Minister may also share information about recent Canadian budget commitments to conservation. INT will prepare briefing material with input from the relevant bureaus and offices.

#### Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

**U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) Steering Committee Meeting:** On May 17, the DOI Ocean, Great Lakes, and Coastal program coordinator will co-chair the USCRTF Steering Committee Meeting, which includes participation from federal, state, and territorial members. The focus of the meeting will be continued planning for the next meeting in August in American Samoa in August, as well as presentation of a draft Coral Restoration resolution for decision at that meeting. (Via conference call; no press)

#### Hurricane Recovery

**FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group:** The Department continues to participate in the FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands (USVI) as the lead federal agency on the Natural and Cultural Resources (NCR) Recovery mission. DOI core teams deployed in Puerto Rico and the USVI to work with the Territorial government representatives and local partners on developing recovery priorities and long-term recovery strategies. The next meeting of the FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group is May 15.

#### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

## International Affairs

**NAFTA 2.0:** In the aftermath of negotiations held in April, INT Policy Division staff continue to coordinate DOI input into interagency review of negotiating positions, including environmental, water and indigenous issues relevant for DOI, under the direction of the Deputy Secretary and ASIIA. In addition, INT is following up with ASIIA and DAS ASLM regarding the latest negotiations associated with Investor State Dispute Settlement, which are relevant to the oil and gas industry.

### **Press Releases Planned for the Following:**

- Grant Award: 2018 Pacific Lineman Training Program \$230,000
- Grant Award: Pacific Utility Engineers Workshop \$17,405
- Grant Award: Coral Fellows Program \$200,000
- Grant Award: Children's Healthy Living Program \$89,997
- Grant Award: RMI 4 Atoll Healthcare Second Half \$713,359.82 (Already approved by Howke)

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

### Insular Affairs

#### **U.S. Interagency Meeting on U.S. National Security Interests in the FAS and Territories:**

On June 8, the State Department and DOI will co-host a U.S.-only interagency dialogue to secure the future U.S. presence in Micronesia to include 1) a session on the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, which builds upon the work of the USG Interagency Working Group on the Freely Associated States and aims to secure U.S. interests beyond 2023; and 2) a session on U.S. territories: Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The dialogue will be held at the SBU/FOUO level.

#### **US Government Continues Discussions with Palau on Compact Funding:**

Following a successful initial meeting in Palau on May 1, 2018 between the United States and Palau representatives, both respective Ambassadors from the United States and Palau are considering a second round of discussions in DC during the week of June 11, 2018.

**White House Visit for the Freely Associated States:** Summer 2018 – The State Department is supportive of a request from the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for a working meeting at the White House for the Presidents of the three freely associated states: Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. Secretary Zinke and FSM President Peter Christian discussed this briefly during a 2017 meeting at Interior.

## International Affairs

**Northern Rangelands Trust Law Enforcement Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is coordinating a technical exchange May 12-June 1 between two law enforcement officers from the Northern

Rangelands Trust (NRT) and Yellowstone National Park. The NRT officers will be joining National Park staff during the seasonal law enforcement officers training. This exchange will provide field training on interoperability and law enforcement coordination. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds this work.

**Combating Wildlife Trafficking Strategic Planning in Kenya:** DOI-ITAP is supporting a two-person team -- consisting of a USGS employee and a retiree from the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement -- to travel to Kenya May 12-24 to help develop a mission strategy to combat wildlife trafficking in Kenya as specified in the END Act. The team will hold meetings with representatives from the U.S. Government and Kenyan partners to map counter wildlife trafficking activities in Kenya. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds this work.

**MOU with Israel on Biodiversity Conservation, Protected Areas, and Cultural and Historical Heritage:** *[UPDATE]* Israel's Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) Director General continues to seek a meeting with DOI at which time he hopes to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretary or his designee. The DG is contemplating a visit in either the spring or fall. The MOU is to strengthen cooperation on biodiversity conservation, protected areas, and cultural and historical heritage. Decisions will need to be made about timing, whether to host an event at DOI or at the Israeli Embassy, and whether and what type of press or other public announcements should be made in conjunction with the signing. INT has shared the latest draft of the MOU for DOI senior leadership review.

**Environmental Affairs Council Meeting in Dominican Republic:** DOI-ITAP will present its successes on training and coordination at the Environmental Affairs Council Meeting June 20-21. DOI-ITAP will also coordinate with State Department to develop a side event to highlight coordination and joint activities between DOI-ITAP, Ministries of Environment, and law enforcement agencies in the region on wild flora and fauna enforcement and prosecutions. The U.S. Department of State funds this work.

**Initial Assessment for Energy Governance and Capacity Building Needs in Romania:** DOI-ITAP is participating, as an invitee, in a scoping assessment led by the State Department's Energy Resources Bureau June 11-15. Representatives from USGS and BOEM have also invited to participate. Site visits will focus on oil and gas concessions, data management and environmental risk mitigation. This initial assessment might lead to further energy governance and capacity building in the region later this year. The U.S. Department of State funds this work.

#### Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

**World Oceans Day and Capitol Hill Ocean Week:** World Oceans Day is June 8 and Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) will be held June 5-7. The Ocean, Great Lakes, and Coastal Program Coordinator, along with the DOI Senior Ocean Policy Team, are coordinating the Department's participation in CHOW, which is hosted annually by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. June has also historically been proclaimed as National Oceans Month, including by President Trump in 2017. Two new issues of the DOI NEWSWAVE newsletter are expected to be released in June for these events.



## **Awareness**

### **International Affairs**

**Vietnamese Minister Meeting with Secretary and MOU Signing:** The Vietnamese Minister of Public Security Tô Lâm has postponed his trip to Washington, DC until a date to be determined, likely late June or early July. The Vietnamese government has expressed interest in the Minister meeting with the Secretary to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen U.S. – Vietnam cooperation to combat wildlife trafficking. The Ministry of Public Security is the government ministry responsible for managing Vietnam’s police and public security forces, which play a key role in wildlife law enforcement. INT continues to work with FWS Office of Law Enforcement and the State Department to finalize the MOU with Vietnam.

**Assistance to Tribes Seeking Repatriation from Abroad; Auction June 21:** In April, INT Policy Division staff received a request for assistance in repatriating several ancestral remains from the Canterbury Museum in New Zealand, from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Nation. INT engaged with the requestors to clarify their needs, and reached out to the NPS National NAGPRA Program and the State Department (DOS) to develop a federal response. Meanwhile, another Paris auction of American Indian items has been announced for June 21. INT Policy Division staff alerted colleagues within DOI and at DOJ and DOS, and will monitor developments with an eye toward helping tribes stay informed and assisting to recover specific items if requested.

**Interagency US-China Science and Technology Agreement (STA) Discussions:** INT is preparing for expected interagency discussions on the renewal of the U.S. - China STA, which may begin in the next couple of weeks. The National Security Council will lead the discussions. The interagency group is considering how to move forward with the STA renewal given some U.S. agency concerns about intellectual property rights, and concerns about whether China sees the STA Annex on intellectual property rights as legally binding. USGS has six protocols that fall under the STA umbrella agreement.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

ASLM Joe Balash will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kate MacGregor will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Casey Hammond will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BSEE Director Scott Angelle will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Bureau of Land Management**

**[UPDATED] May 9 – June 13.** Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 required Federal land managers to designate “energy corridors” on lands in the eleven contiguous western states. The Sec. 368 corridors are for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines as well as electric transmission and distribution lines. As part of the corridor designation process, Federal agencies were required to complete environmental reviews and incorporate the corridors into existing land use plans. In 2009, several non-profit organizations filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court alleging that in designating the corridors agencies did not comply with the Energy Policy Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and other related laws. The parties negotiated a settlement agreement that directs the agencies to periodically review corridors on a regional basis. These reviews are now moving forward, and stakeholder workshops are scheduled for Region 2 & 3 energy corridor reviews as follows: May 31 in Albuquerque, NM; June 4 in Phoenix, AZ; June 6 in Reno, NV; June 11 in Grand Junction, CO; and June 13 in Richfield, UT. The project web site will announce the workshops on May 9, and a press release publicizing them is being prepared for posting on May 16. <http://corridoreis.anl.gov> (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] May 13 – 19.** BLM-AK. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) released the Donlin Gold Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on April 27. BLM will prepare a joint Record of Decision (ROD) with USACE, planned for early August per USACE’s schedule. Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Joe Balash is the tentative signatory for BLM, and Alaska District Chief of Regulatory Division David Hobbie for the Corps. BLM-Alaska plans to have a ROD/ROW briefing package for Acting BLM Alaska State Director Karen Mouritsen by mid-May. On May 14, Laurie Thorpe, Jenny Blanchard, and Bonnie Million will participate in a consulting party meeting for the PA, which will be an appendix to the joint ROD. Donlin Gold LLC applied for permits for an open-pit, hardrock gold mine in southwest Alaska. The site will also include waste treatment and waste rock facilities, a mill, and a natural-gas-powered power plant. BLM-AK has been participating as a cooperating agency and is responsible for a ROW authorization. Donlin Gold applied for a ROW on one-third of the 316-mile proposed natural gas pipeline. The ROW would cross approximately 92 miles and 4,322 acres of largely remote and undisturbed BLM-managed public lands. The affected public lands are under a 1981 Management Framework Plan and the area is included in the Bering Sea/Western Interior Resource Management Plan, currently under development. <http://www.DonlinGoldEIS.com>. (3/1/18)

**[UPDATED] May 13 – June 15.** BLM-AK is preparing a *Federal Register* notice for the State of Alaska’s application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Egegik River, Becharof Lake, and Ruth Lake and Outlet in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State’s application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State’s title and restore the State’s sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 290,983 acres of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The [2005 Bristol Bay Area Plan](#) from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources identified some mineral potential in the areas surrounding Egegik River and Becharof Lake. The plan also gives a summary of the region. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 13 – June 15.** BLM-AK is issuing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Taku River in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that the Taku River is navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title to the bed of the navigable waters and to restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 36,160 acres (35 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and the U.S. Forest Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/13/18) DTS 2055

**In Mid-May.** BLM-ID. Boise District Fire and Aviation expects to sign the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-Grouse Habitat (BOSH) Project. The Final EIS was released for a 30-day public availability period on Feb. 9. The Final EIS, which was developed in cooperation with several state and federal agencies, analyzes the removal of encroaching Western juniper on 726,000 acres of sagebrush steppe habitat in Owyhee County. This juniper treatment project builds on proactive land management policies and practices to conserve the region's remaining sagebrush habitat, which supports significant economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, as well as abundant wildlife, including mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope and golden eagles. The public availability period closed on March 11. The BLM received ten comments, including comments addressing roughly three issues that will be documented in the ROD. The district is currently completing tribal consultation on the Final EIS and estimates signing the ROD in mid-May. (2/21/18)

**[UPDATED] May 14.** The Annual BLM Law Enforcement Awards Ceremony will take place at 1:30 p.m. at the Main Interior Building. At this ceremony, which takes place during National Police Week, the BLM will honor its Law Enforcement Officers of the Year. BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed and Acting Deputy Director for Operations Mike Nedd will attend. DOI officials have been invited but have not yet confirmed. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] May 14 – 18.** BLM-UT. The Price Field Office will release for public review and comment an Environmental Assessment analyzing two coal lease modification proposals. Canyon Fuel Company proposes to modify two federal coal leases at their SUFCO Mine in Sevier County. The proposed modifications are contiguous and combined, totaling 790 acres and containing an estimated 6.25 million tons of recoverable coal. The SUFCO Mine is approximately 25 miles east of Salina. There are no significant issues associated with the

proposal, which has state and local support. The proposal would not create any new jobs but would extend the life of the existing mine by approximately 1.5 years. (4/4/18)

**[NEW] May 14 – June 8.** BLM State, District, and Field Offices will review a revised draft of H-4150, Unauthorized Grazing Use. The handbook is being updated to respond to GAO Report-16-559, Unauthorized Grazing, which included a recommendation for revising the agency's Unauthorized Grazing Use Handbook to make it consistent with 43 CFR 4100. The handbook was last released in 1977 and 1984. The completion date for revision is March 31, 2019. This handbook is intended to help field managers comply with 43 CFR 4150 for procedural direction and standards for prevention and control of unauthorized grazing use on BLM-administered lands. (5/4/18)

**May 14 – June 12.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office (WRFO) will announce a 30-day public comment period on its plan (pending WO approval) to gather wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area (HMA) in northwestern Colorado. The Appropriate Management Level for the HMA is 135-235 wild horses and the current population estimate in the HMA is 544 wild horses. WRFO estimates that there are 374 wild horses living outside the HMA. This includes 305 horses in the adjacent, controversial West Douglas Herd Area. The BLM has never managed West Douglas for a long-term wild horse population because of habitat and terrain, and has not been able to remove all the wild horses from this area. Many activists want to see the BLM maintain a wild horse population in West Douglas. Conversely, ranchers in the area have long argued for the removal of all wild horses in West Douglas. In September 2017, the BLM removed 86 wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas HMA (but not from West Douglas) that were impacting private lands. WRFO is preparing a Determination of NEPA Adequacy for this year's potential gather, tiered to an environmental analysis completed last year. (4/10/18)

**[UPDATED] May 15.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Green Planet Exploratory Excavation Project Environmental Assessment. Green Planet's Plan of Operation is to excavate and process 400 yd<sup>3</sup> of placer material from a fenced site, approximately 220 feet by 75 feet (total work area), situated on the St. Philips placer claim on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Mohave Ground Squirrel Area of Critical Environmental Concern. A total of five public comments were received on the project. The Decision has the potential to draw negative attention from the Center for Biological Diversity and other environmental organizations that have expressed concerns with possible impacts to Mohave ground squirrel and desert tortoise. Tortoise exclosure fencing will be built around the project work site, parking and excavation areas for to minimize impacts. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 15.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates publishing a draft Environmental Assessment for the Keystone Exploratory Drilling Project, located on existing unpatented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The National Park Service is a cooperating agency on the joint document because of water rights to a spring and an existing a water pipeline that crosses the Death Valley National Park. All drilling will occur outside the park and will be supported by existing roads and pads, with several of the drill sites being in

existing road surfaces. Less than an acre of new disturbance is anticipated. This project has the potential to draw negative attention from environmental organizations. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 15.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Perdito Exploratory Drilling Project Environmental Assessment. The Perdito Exploration Project is located on existing un-patented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Silver Standard U.S. Holdings Inc. intends to construct drill pads and subsequently drill diamond core exploration holes to a maximum depth of 1,000-feet deep in an area that has been previously explored. The Decision includes helicopter supported drilling to minimize building new roads and disturbance. Less than an acre of new disturbance is anticipated. The Center for Biological Diversity and local community members have expressed concerns with the project due to possible environmental impacts and strong opposition to open pit mining. (4/20/18)

**May 15.** BLM-ID. On May 15, the Bruneau Field Manager will issue two of three proposed grazing decisions, which renew grazing permits, restore riparian areas, protect cultural resources, and incorporate range improvement projects across 187,537 acres of BLM-administered lands. The project area lies entirely within a Priority Habitat Management Area, and contains wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was released on August 30, 2017. (2/7/18)

**[NEW] May 15 – 16.** BLM-OR/WA. Prineville District leadership will participate in the Rural Fire Protection Association (RFPA) pre-season fire summit in Burns, Oregon. Oregon's RFPAs operate much like volunteer fire departments, with several additional functions. They are comprised of community volunteers – often the ranchers and farmers most familiar with the landscape – who respond to fire call-outs alongside BLM wildland firefighters, providing the initial attack on wildland blazes in sagebrush country. (5/4/18)

**[NEW] May 16.** BLM-AK. BLM Alaska staff will travel to the Kuskokwim River village of Sleetmute to present an update on the cleanup of the Red Devil mercury mine site. The BLM held similar meetings in seven mid-Kuskokwim River villages in April. The Red Devil Mine is an abandoned cinnabar mine and mercury production facility 250 miles west of Anchorage on 10 acres of BLM-managed land. The land has been selected for land conveyance by The Kuskokwim Corporation, an Alaska Native corporation. (5/4/18)

**May 16.** BLM-ES. A meeting will take place at Fort Knox Garrison, Kentucky, between BLM Eastern States, Fort Knox Garrison (Department of Defense), and Louisville Gas & Electric (LG&E). This is the third meeting between the three entities (the first occurring December 7, 2017; the second on February 15, 2018). These regularly scheduled meetings are opportunities for open dialogue between all parties who have an interest in the LG&E Gas Storage Area located at the Garrison. Five working groups were identified during the February meeting: Energy Resilience (including gas storage and forecast of plans); Security Concerns; Land Acquisition Documents (showing chronology); Environmental Requirements (state and Federal); and Coordinate Range/Training Plans for Troops. The working groups are expected to report out at this meeting. (4/20/18)

**May 16 – 17. BLM-AK.** The Resource Advisory Council will meet in Fairbanks. The agenda will include updates on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, the Greater Moose's Tooth 2 project, and the proposed Willow Development. There will be updates on current planning efforts, such as the Road to Ambler Mining District Environmental Impact Statement and the Bering Sea-Western Interior and Central Yukon Resource Management Plans. Five of the council's subcommittees will present their reports on placer mining, recreation, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Council members will receive an overview on Alaska subsistence; Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) including the Northwest Boreal LCC, Western Alaska LCC, and Aleutian Bering Sea Islands LCC; and explore partnership opportunities with local, regional, state, and federal entities. The council will also hear intertribal coalition presentations from the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Kuskokwim Fish Intertribal Commission, and Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission. The Federal Register meeting Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1939

**May 17. BLM-CA.** Bishop Field Office staff, state and federal natural resource management agencies, and Native American tribes from eastern California and western Nevada will attend the quarterly Bi-State Tribal Natural Resources Committee Meeting in Walker, Mono County, Calif. The committee allows information sharing about resource issues. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 17. BLM-UT.** The Fillmore Field Office expects to submit a letter of Non-Compliance to Red Dome Inc. for exceeding the approved disturbance amount of 64 acres in their Plan of Operations by 46 acres. This is an attempt to bring Red Dome Inc. back into compliance with 43 CFR 3890. This action may become controversial in the local area of Millard County. Red Dome currently mines volcanic cinders for a wide range of purposes. Field office staff have been in communication with Red Dome through meetings and letters over the last three years in an attempt to bring the site into compliance, but the company has not taken action. The Solicitor's Office is assisting field office staff with preparation of a Notice on Non-Compliance. Red Dome currently employs only a few local individuals; however, there is the potential for Red Dome to become a larger local employer. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] May 18. BLM-UT.** The Salt Lake Field Office will release for public review and comment an EA analyzing a proposal to gather and remove excess wild horses from the Onaqui Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA) and a 10-year plan to maintain appropriate management levels using PZP fertility control and periodic removal of horses. The HMA has a current population of 455 horses with a projected number of 500 with the 2018 foal crop. The BLM proposes to gather and remove approximately 379 horses to reach a low Appropriate Management Level of 121. The Onaqui Mountain HMA is located in Tooele County, Utah, approximately an hour drive from Salt Lake City. The gather will most likely be controversial with horse advocacy groups, range organizations, and the general public due to the HMA's proximity to Salt Lake City and popularity. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 18. BLM-WY.** The High Desert District Office and Rock Springs Field Office will conduct tribal consultation with the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Tribes regarding a trespass bladed road. The trespass road is located along an existing Rocky Mountain Power Company power line from Rock Springs to Atlantic City, Wyoming. In 2016, the company's contractor exceeded the access road maintenance area and conducted unauthorized blading and disturbance outside of the right-of-way in areas of cultural significance. The company alerted

the BLM of the disturbance in 2016, after which BLM issued a noncompliance order. Over the last year, the BLM has worked with the parties involved, including the tribes, to catalogue culturally significant sites that were affected by the unauthorized disturbance. No incidents of severe cultural site disturbance were identified. As such, and since the disturbance was located along an existing right-of-way, the BLM has not issued an Archaeological Resources Protection Act violation. On May 18, all parties will conduct a site visit together to assess current conditions, prior to initiating reclamation efforts. No media is invited. (5/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 18 – 23.** BLM-OR/WA. Umpqua Watersheds submitted a notice of appeal and statement of reasons to formally appeal the BLM’s denial of their protest of the First Floras and Crystal Clear Timber Sales. The Coos Bay District sent the administrative record to the Interior Board of Land Appeals on April 9, 2018, and the agency’s response to the statement of reasons is due May 18, 2018. The Crystal Clear Timber Sale includes 116 acres of regeneration harvest in the harvest land base land use allocation, and will yield 5.6 million board feet of timber. Scott Timber Company purchased the timber at an oral auction on April 27, 2018. The First Floras Timber Sale includes 25 acres of regeneration harvest in the harvest land base, and is expected to yield 1.2 million board feet. The timber will be sold at auction on May 23, 2018. Both sales are controversial as environmental organizations, such as Umpqua Watersheds, posit that regeneration harvests remove older forests and degrade wildlife habitat. (3/30/18)

**May 20.** BLM-UT. The comment period for the Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone Environmental Assessment ends. During the comment period, the field office will host a public meeting to provide information and answer questions regarding the proposal. The Cedar City Field Office released the EA for public review and comment on April 20. The EA analyzes the effects of leasing approximately 5,564 acres of public lands for solar energy development in Beaver County, Utah. Sensitive species that may be found in the project area include Kit Fox and Burrowing Owl. Mapped greater sage-grouse habitat is adjacent to the southern and eastern boundaries of the proposed lease areas. According to the Solar PEIS analysis, the solar energy zone encompasses portions of three perennial grazing allotments (13 percent of the Minersville 4 Allotment; two percent of the Minersville 5 Allotment; and 10 percent of the Minersville 6 Allotment). These allotments are used by nine permittees and support the production of 4,986 AUMs of forage per year. The Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone was designated as part of the 2012 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. (2/21/18)

**[NEW] May 21.** BLM-MT/DK. The Lewistown Field Office is starting the planning process for the Crooked Creek/Musselshell Travel Management Plan. This is the second of four travel management plans the Lewistown Field Office is developing. It covers approximately 780 square miles in a county with a population of 475. A news release will be sent out on or around May 21 to announce the public scoping meetings for the Environmental Assessment of these units in northern Petroleum County. The Lewistown Field Office plans to have separate meetings (one in Lewistown and one in Winnett, Mont.) in early June to solicit public comments on the motorized route alternatives. The plan is not expected to generate any significant controversy. (5/4/18)

**May 21 – 22.** BLM-UT will host a Resource Advisory Council meeting in Salt Lake City. Agenda items include BLM updates from the State Director, fire dispatch study implementation, 2018 fire season outlook, updates on planning process Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears

National Monuments, Watershed Protection Task Force, Mountain Accord, Washington County issues, Lake Powell pipeline project, recreation fee proposals, and planning updates. The public comment period will take place on May 22. The Federal Register meeting Notice published on April 2. (3/7/18) DTS 1945

**[UPDATED] May 21 – 25.** BLM-ES expects to publish in the Federal Register a Notice to reoffer a coal lease sale of 160 acres of Federal mineral estate in Jefferson, County, Alabama. The Federal tract (ALES 55199) is adjacent to the existing Narley Mine No. 3 (fee land) permitted under the Alabama Surface Mining Commission (Permit P-3954). The Federal tract would provide approximately 469,000 recoverable tons of federal coal. The BLM-ES anticipates conducting a competitive coal lease sale in July 2018, on a date TBD within the timeframe allowed following publication of notice in the Federal Register. The Federal tract was originally offered for competitive sale on April 14, 2016. The single bid received from Best Coal, Inc. did not meet the minimum bid as approved by the BLM and the Office of Valuation Services Division of Minerals Evaluation (DME). The DME concurred with the updated Fair Market Value report on March 30, 2018, clearing the way for the re-offer. The Federal Register notice correspondence file was routed for review by the Office of the Solicitor on April 30, 2018. (4/4/18) DTS 14231

**[NEW] May 21 – 25.** BLM-ID. The Shoshone Field Office is working with the Idaho Department of Lands to acquire three easements across state land in the Jerome County Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) leased area. Jerome County has an R&PP lease that covers approximately 6,589 acres of public land referred to as Snake River Canyons Park. The easements, which total approximately 3,588 feet in length, would provide additional opportunities for Jerome County to continue developing their lease and provide permanent public access to an area overlooking the popular Shoshone Falls from the north side of the Snake River Canyon. The project is not controversial, but has been covered in local media and gained the attention of local politicians and congressional staff. The Shoshone Field Office anticipates a decision on whether to acquire the easements the week of May 21 – 25. (5/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 21 – June 19.** BLM-AK is scheduling public scoping meetings on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement during the 60-day public comment period that closes on June 19. Karen Mouritsen, BLM-AK Acting State Director, will attend the May 21-23 meetings in Arctic Village, Kaktovik and Utqiagvik. Ted Murphy, BLM-AK Associate State Director, will attend the May 29 and 30 meetings in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Joseph Balash, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Kate MacGregor, and Senior Advisory for Alaska Affairs Steven Wackowski also plan to attend. The Federal Register published the Notice of Intent (NOI) on April 20, initiating public scoping on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOI began a 60-day comment period that closes on June 19. The Federal Register also published a technical correction on April 26, adding a website for commenting. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis that is required before a lease sale can be held. Because it is a major unexplored, but potentially productive geologic onshore basin, oil and gas from the Coastal Plain is an important resource for meeting our



nation's energy needs and achieving energy dominance. BLM-AK awarded EMPSi, a third-party contractor, the contract on April 18 to support development of the EIS. (3/16/18) DTS 1996

**[NEW] May 22 – 23.** The 8th Annual Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI) Workshop will be held in Boise, Idaho. This annual meeting is planned and hosted by the Landscapes Initiative Team of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), who coordinate the SGI. Approximately 155 employees from Federal and non-Federal entities are expected. Invited attendees represent important conservation partners to the BLM, including the NRCS, SGI, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Governor's Office, researchers, and private groups. (5/4/18)

**May 23.** The Annual Making a Difference National Volunteer Awards ceremony will take place at 1:00 pm Eastern Time in Room 5071 at the Main Interior Building (MIB). Winners have been selected and all states with winners have been informed. An IB formally announcing this year's honorees will be posted in early May. Awardees will travel to their state offices to receive their awards. Each state office hosting a winner will be live-linked through the video teleconferencing system to MIB for the ceremony. Chris McAlear, Assistant Director for National Conservation Lands and Community Partnerships, is tentatively slated to serve as Master of Ceremony. Awards are presented at individual state offices by state leadership in those offices. (3/20/18)

**May 23.** BLM-MT/DK. Indian Outreach Meetings will take place in Mandaree, North Dakota. Representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, BLM, Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), and Office of Special Trustee for American Indians will be available to answer questions by individual Indian Mineral interest owners on mineral ownership, development and royalties. ONRR will mail a meeting notice reminder to individuals living locally and advertise in local media. This is not an event where media or general (non-allottee) public have been invited. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 23.** BLM-OR/WA. The Coos Bay District Office will hold a salvage timber sale at an oral auction on May 23. The District Office released the Decision Record for the Chetco Fire Salvage Categorical Exclusion on May 3. The project includes 140 acres of harvest to salvage trees in the harvest land base that were damaged during the summer 2017 Chetco Bar Fire. The decision to salvage the timber may be controversial. (3/30/18)

**[NEW] May 24.** BLM-MT/DK. Acting State Director Jon Raby and staff will meet with Three Affiliated Tribes (TAT) Chairman Mark Fox and members of the TAT Tribal Counsel in Bismarck, North Dakota, as a follow-up to the March Federal Partner's Meeting and the Chairman's request for face-to-face government-to-government consultation. Topics will include the following: Flaring, Slawson Applications for Permit to Drill, Underground Injection Wells, Update on the 3179 Regulations, and Overlapping Communitization Agreements. The media and public are not invited. (5/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 24.** BLM-OR/WA. The Upper Willamette Field Office, Northwest Oregon District, is proposing timber harvest using regeneration harvest and commercial thinning across approximately 1,160 acres within the Harvest Land Base—Moderate Intensity Timber Area land use allocation. The proposed project is located east and south of Cottage Grove, Oregon. This

project is being analyzed in the Row River Timber Management Environmental Assessment (EA), expected to be released for public review in May 2018. This EA analyzes harvesting approximately 50,000 MBF (thousand board feet) of timber expected to be sold between FY 2018 and FY 2023. This project is designed to conform to the Northwestern and Coastal Oregon 2016 Record of Decision / Resource Management Plan. The BLM expects that timber sale decisions analyzed in this EA will be protested and appealed. (4/4/18)

**May 24 – 25.** BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed has been invited to speak at the National Association of Counties (NACo) Western Interstate Region (WIR) Annual Conference in Sun Valley, Idaho. The WIR Conference brings together hundreds of county officials each year for a discussion of federal policy issues impacting counties and to help shape NACo's advocacy efforts on behalf of counties. (4/26/18)

**May 30.** BLM-ID. The Bruneau Field Manager will issue a decision that designates 1,521 miles of routes as part of a comprehensive travel management plan within the Bruneau Field Office. In 2009, the Owyhee Public Lands Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The Canyonlands East Travel Management Plan is the first of five travel management plans that are underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. Local, state, and federal agencies and NGOs are generally supportive of it. The one exception is motorcycle groups. It is unknown whether they will appeal. (2/7/18)

**May 30.** BLM-ID. The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) Manager will be issuing a travel management plan decision for the southern portion of the NCA. In 2009, the Owyhee Public Lands Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management plans on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The NCA South Travel Management Plan is the second of five travel management plans that are underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. According to the Boise District Office, counties are generally okay with it. However, Idaho Parks & Recreation (state) and some motorized groups may appeal it. (2/7/18)

**May 30.** BLM-NM is proposing to hold a public event to celebrate the recent donation of lands to the BLM that allowed for public access into the Sabinoso Wilderness. The event, tentatively scheduled for May 30 (pending approval), would include a small ceremony and organized hikes for VIPs and the public in the Wilderness. Invitees would include Secretary Zinke, Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Congressman Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Wilderness Land Trust President Brad Borst, and BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed. (4/26/18)

**May 31.** BLM-CO. The Southwest District has prepared a Notice of Proposed Meeting for the Southwest Resource Advisory Council. Pending publication in the Federal Register, the meeting will be held in Fruita. Planned agenda items include training members on their participation on the Recreation Resource Advisory Council, recreation fee proposals, the close-out of the Dominguez-Escalante Advisory Council and forming a subcommittee dedicated to partnership-based trail building in the Grand Junction area. The Federal Register Notice package is currently being routed in the WO. The Southwest District is planning on a May 1, 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/4/18) DTS 2068

**In May.** A report to Congress on efforts to conserve Greater Sage-Grouse, restore sagebrush habitat, and implement a native seed strategy was due July 4, 2017, per direction from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017. The report has been prepared in final draft, but submission to ASLM has been delayed pending determination of the degree to which grants and agreements will be utilized going forward to achieve the purposes of the native seed strategy. (4/4/18) DTS 11379

**In May.** SO 3359 implements Executive Order 13817, which aims to reduce the vulnerability to disruption of critical mineral supply among other stated goals. The Order requires BLM to submit to the Secretary, within 60-days, a report with a list of recommendations to: 1) improve access to lands to explore for and develop critical minerals; 2) streamline permitting and review processes related to critical minerals development; and 3) otherwise increase critical mineral discovery, production, and domestic refining. The BLM has drafted a report with 13 recommendations across these categories that is under review in Washington. (3/30/18)

**In May.** At the request of the Department, the BLM prepared for the Office of Management and Budget a report on hardrock mineral royalties regimes in the United States. The report discusses options for a Federal royalty on hardrock minerals, litigation risks, legislative history, and provides additional background information. The report is under review in the BLM Washington Office. (3/30/18)

**[NEW] In May.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register Notice announcing a Call for Nominations and Comments on tracts available for leasing for the 2018 National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) oil and gas lease sale. The publication of the notice begins a 30-day comment/nomination period. The BLM is required to publish the Notice of Sale at least 30 days before the sale. BLM-AK has corresponded sale dates with the State of Alaska's lease sales since 2010, generally during November or December each year. The State of Alaska will offer lease tracts adjacent to the NPR-A on that coordinated date. A briefing paper on the litigation of Determination of NEPA Adequacy from the 2016 and 2017 lease sales is included in the package outlining the two lawsuits. Currently, all parties have agreed to an expedited briefing schedule that will conclude Aug. 7, 2018 for the court to make a determination. The NPR-A is exempt from Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and it is not a multiple-use unit guided by a resource management plan. Instead, the BLM utilizes an "integrated activity plan" or IAP. Each lease sale goes through a review to determine NEPA adequacy and the 2018 lease sale is expected to follow the same process as all lease sales since 2011, when annual sales were directed by Presidential Order. (5/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-AK will submit a Federal Register Notice for revocation of five Public Land Orders (PLOs), which will open approximately 229,632 acres in the Goodnews Bay region for surface entry, mineral exploration and mining; it will also make the state selections effective, and allow the BLM to move forward in conveying lands to the State under their Statehood entitlement. The PLOs were issued in 1972, pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Sec. 17(d)(1), and were recommended for revocation in the 2008 Bay Resource Management Plan. The Notice is under review at the BLM Alaska State Office. (3/1/18)

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona State Office has received five Expressions of Interest (EOI) for oil and gas leasing between October 2017 and January 2018. The EOI's total 6,761 acres and are

located in Apache and Navajo counties. The adjudication has been completed, and three parcels have been created and forwarded to the Safford Field Office for National Environmental Policy Act analysis. (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office has been requested to transfer 3,380.69 acres (surface and subsurface) to the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) through a noncompetitive direct sale for the appraised fair market value. The subject parcels are located on the western and southern margins of the Gila River Indian Reservation in Maricopa and Pinal Counties in Arizona, south of the Phoenix metro area. These lands are isolated from other BLM lands in the area and were identified as suitable for disposal in the BLM's Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. The GRIC is very interested in acquiring these lands because of their adjacency to its reservation and the presence of cultural resources significant to them present on these lands. The non-competitive direct sale is being pursued at the request of the GRIC, which was formally submitted in 2015. The BLM Arizona Land Tenure Steering Committee recommended pursuing this action in May 2015; this recommendation was approved by the Arizona State Director. The BLM has completed an appraisal to determine fair market value of the parcel (\$9,620,000) and is in the process of notifying other potential interested and qualified parties about the sale. (4/4/18) DTS 1804

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona Strip Field Office is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), in order for the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline project to proceed. The analysis in the RMP amendment will subsequently be incorporated into an associated environmental impact statement (EIS) for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project being completed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The FERC is the lead agency to complete the EIS for the Pipeline Project; the BLM is a cooperating agency. The Utah Division of Water Resources is the Project proponent. Although only a small portion (900 acres) of the management area is affected, the BLM must complete the RMP amendment to address inconsistencies between the decisions in the current RMP, the proposed route for the Pipeline, and an existing utility corridor designated. Approximately 1.5 miles of the proposed Pipeline would run through the Kanab Creek ACEC. This information will be incorporated into the FERC's EIS for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. (4/4/18) DTS 1860

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office will move forward with release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement related to development of the proposed Sonoran Valley Parkway Project (SVPP) by the City of Goodyear in Maricopa County, Arizona. This project provides the opportunity to create immediate and future jobs, help bolster the growing local economy, and reduce emergency service response times. The City has approximately 77,000 residents and is part of the Phoenix-metropolitan area, which has approximately 4.5 million residents. The SVPP will provide needed enhancements to infrastructure as the area is projected to experience significant growth. The proposed project would involve approximately 475 acres of BLM-managed public lands. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 1775

**In May.** BLM-AZ. BLM Arizona will publish its Record of Decision (ROD) for Recreational Target Shooting in the Sonoran Desert National Monument. A March 2015 federal court order required the BLM to re-analyze impacts of recreational target shooting on the monument. The

ROD, which was developed after extensive public outreach and analysis, preserves access for target shooting on nearly 90% of the monument, while ensuring public safety in the area of heaviest family recreation use—the Juan Bautista de Anza Recreation Management Zone (RMZ). The ROD was filed with U.S. District Court in Phoenix on March 5, 2018, and the announcement will coincide with publication of the Notice of the Availability in the Federal Register. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1976

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CA intends to renew the site license for Calpine’s Sonoma Power Plant, which is located at The Geysers geothermal area in Sonoma County. The 30-year license required for operations has expired. The Ukiah Field Office posted an unsigned Categorical Exclusion (CX) for public review on ePlanning on Jan. 24 and the CX was signed Feb. 1. Once the proponent signs the license, BLM-CA will finalize the process and issue the site license. (3/16/18)

**In May.** BLM-CA is preparing an Environmental Assessment and Resource Management Plan Amendment for a proposed transmission and water pipeline right-of-way (ROW) associated with the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Project in Riverside County. In 2014, the Eagle Crest Energy Company obtained a 50-year license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to construct, operate, and maintain the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project. The BLM is processing a ROW application associated with the 1,300-megawatt hydroelectric project that includes a 500-kV transmission line and a 12-inch water pipeline energy transmission. The project is estimated to create 4,300 jobs during construction and will contribute to the state’s energy portfolio. The City of Palm Springs and Cathedral City, environmental groups, and Colorado River Indian Tribes have voiced concern over the project, including its proximity to Joshua Tree National Park, impacts to critical or endangered desert species, and potential impacts to water, and cultural and historic resources. The project is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18)

**In May.** BLM-CA anticipates approval to publish a draft Notice of Availability of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Land Use Plan Amendment for the revised technology of the approximately 4,200-acre Palen Solar Photovoltaic Project, a 6.7-mile generation intertie transmission line connecting the project to the SCE Red Bluff Substation. The Final Supplemental EIS analyzes the consequences of granting a right-of-way to construct, operate and maintain a 500-megawatt solar photovoltaic facility near Desert Center, Riverside County. The project would create approximately 1,145 peak construction jobs and up to 12 full-time operational jobs. The project is controversial as it has attracted media attention and environmental groups have expressed concerns about the impacts to surface hydrology, groundwater, biological resources, visual resources, and air quality. Congressional interest includes Sen. Harris (D-CA), Sen. Feinstein (D-CA), and Rep. Ruiz (D-CA-36). State interest includes Gov. Jerry Brown and staff. Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1968

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of four parcels totaling 6.72 acres to the City of Black Hawk in Gilpin County. The adjacent, surrounding lands are primarily owned by the city and they intend to use the parcels for infrastructure, recreation and open space. The parcels are currently segregated from the 1872 Mining Law. The segregation will expire May 5. The proposal is not

considered controversial. The potential for controversy would increase if the segregation period expires due to the possibility of nuisance claims being filed on the parcels, which would interfere with the city's plan. RGFO is planning for a spring 2018 (before the segregation expiration, pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. Revisions to the NORA and the DOI briefing paper, as well as parcel maps were sent to Acting Senior Policy Advisor Kevin Oliver on April 11. (2/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Uncompahgre Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its preliminary environmental assessment for Gunnison Energy's North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan near Paonia. The proposal includes developing 35 Federal oil and gas wells on five well pads, new or upgraded access roads, and new gas and water gathering lines on Federal and private lands. The project would produce approximately 700 billion cubic feet of natural gas over 30 years. (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office is planning to issue a decision on a proposal to expand the Fourmile Trail System outside of Buena Vista. Community-led meetings were held from December 2016 through February 2017 to develop the proposal, which includes ten miles of new motorized and non-motorized trails totaling approximately 18 miles. Concerns from ranchers, wildlife managers and private property owners were considered when the proposal was developed. Since 2002, the Fourmile Trail System had had several routes constructed, along with a series of trail improvement projects. (4/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Rocky Mountain District and Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with representatives from Senator Gardner's staff to discuss recreational mineral collection in the Cache Creek Placer Area. BLM acquired Cache Creek – a 2,160-acre parcel – in 2000 through the Land and Water Conservation program. The Cache Creek Placer Area Management Plan, approved February 2016, requires individuals to obtain a Special Recreation Permit to collect minerals recreationally in Cache Creek with stipulations defining allowed uses and locations, as well as prohibited acts to prevent resource damage. While mineral deposits exist on the property, and there is interest in claim staking in the area, the parcel is not open to the General Mining Law of 1872 since it was acquired post-FLPMA. The meeting date was originally scheduled for March 26 and postponed due to scheduling conflicts. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. BLM Colorado is preparing a Notice of Proposed Reinstatement for Context Energy's terminated oil and gas lease (COC77678). The lease is located in Archuleta and La Plata counties, totaling approximately 1,920 acres. The lease was terminated on June 1, 2017 because Context Energy failed to pay rental fees on time. If approved, the lease would be reinstated with an increased royalty rate and rental fee. BLM Colorado is planning for a May 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its proposal to use bait and/or water trapping as the preferred method for future removal of wild horses from the Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area. The proposal includes continuing to treat mares with fertility control to slow population growth. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 35 and 65 animals. The BLM estimates the Spring Creek Basin herd is at the high AML for the HMA. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-ES is working with the U.S. Coast Guard on a withdrawal revocation package for Lot 22 of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA), Florida. The package was sent April 12, 2018 to the Knoxville Field Solicitor's Office for legal sufficiency review. The BLM is the primary administrator of the 120-acre ONA, engaging in shared stewardship of the site in collaboration with local partners. The U.S. Coast Guard submitted a Notice of Intent to Relinquish Lot 22 (16.41 acres) to the BLM in June 2017. Lot 22 includes the lighthouse, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and receives more than 75,000 visitors annually. The BLM is currently in the suitability determination phase of the relinquishment, which includes an environmental assessment, preparation of a suitability report, completion of a NEPA compliance document, and publication of a Notice in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**In May.** BLM MT/DK. The Butte Field Office is conducting prescribed burns as part of the vegetation restoration project in the Iron Mask Planning Area of Broadwater County, Mont. This effort continues despite a recent story in the Helena Independent Record that Native Ecosystem Council (NEC) and Alliance for the Wild Rockies (AWR) have filed a Complaint for Injunctive Relief in U.S. District Court seeking to halt the project. The BLM has been formally served with the complaint. The Butte Field Office is working with the DOI Solicitor's Office and Department of Justice to prepare a response. Both NEC and AWR filed administrative protests and appeals with OHA and IBLA on these same actions, but did not prevail in that review process. (3/30/18)

**In May.** BLM-MT/DK. The Lewistown Field Office is preparing a Notice of Realty Action for Federal Register publication announcing the BLM's classification of 80 acres at Bynum Reservoir in Teton County, Mont., as suitable for conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The Federal Register Notice will also inform the public that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has applied to have the land conveyed from the BLM to MFWP. MFWP has maintained a fishing and recreation access site on Bynum Reservoir for over 20 years with a right-of-way from the BLM. The BLM Lewistown Field Office will convey the 80 acres to MFWP under the condition that the State will never sell the land or change its current recreational use; otherwise the land will return to the BLM. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-NV. The Ely District will release the Final EIS for the Gold Rock Mine Project. The BLM will not issue a final decision on the proposed project for a minimum of 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The proposed project would add 300 direct jobs during construction and 150 to 250 direct jobs during peak mining operations. The project is located 50 west of Ely and 30 miles southeast of Eureka in rural White Pine County, Nevada. White Pine County and Eureka County are supportive of the project and the local rural economic development it will bring. Local livestock grazing permittees have expressed concern about the loss of forage within the fenced mine area, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife has expressed concerns about the project in regard to impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse and crucial mule deer winter habitat. The mining company has included voluntary mitigation to reduce these impacts. The Notice is under review in Washington. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-NM. The Carlsbad Field Office expects to publish the Notice of Availability (NOA) for its Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, outlining the

BLM's long-term "landscape-level" plans and goals for public lands in Lea, Chaves, and Eddy Counties. The planning area includes approximately 2.1 million acres of Federal surface land and 3 million acres of BLM-managed mineral estate in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties. The NOA is under review in Washington D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 2012

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT is considering the non-competitive, direct sale to PacifiCorp of 200 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to PacifiCorp non-competitively due to the lack of public access and their ownership of the surrounding lands, pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-3(a)(4). Conveyance of the identified public lands would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18) DTS 1984

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT is considering the modified competitive sale of 160 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value to the adjacent landowners Hunter Prep Plant LLC, Ross Huntington, and Clinton Price. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to the adjoining land owners on a modified competitive basis, with Hunter Prep Plant, LLC as the designated bidder, giving them the right to meet the highest bid pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-2(a)(1). Conveyance of the identified public land would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18) DTS 1985

**In May.** BLM-UT expects to approve a Final Environmental Impact Statement for Alton Coal, which seeks to expand its existing mine by leasing federal coal on 3,581 acres of public and private lands near Alton, Utah. The Alton Coal Tract contains 59.6 million tons of bituminous coal, and the proposed action could extend mining operations by 25 years. The lease sale needs to occur by summer 2018 for continuous operations. (2/21/18) DTS 2032

**In May.** BLM-UT. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Notice of Intended Disposition will be published in four newspapers in the Four Corners region for two weeks. Publication will communicate BLM-Utah's intention to repatriate to the Hopi Tribe human remains and 4,121 associated funerary objects that were illegally excavated and/or disturbed in 2008 from Site 42SA9266 on BLM-administered lands in San Juan County, Utah. This notice is under review in Washington. (3/23/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT. The Utah State Director will transmit a Federal Register notice to WO-240 regarding a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) effort. This notice will correct a previous notice published in 2004 to update the minimum number of individuals from two archaeological sites in southwestern Utah based on updated osteological analysis. Publishing the notice in the Federal Register will be one of the final steps in the NAGPRA process to repatriate the remains of 12 individuals and thousands of associated funerary objects to Hopi Tribe. In accordance with the results of the tribal consultations, all of the human remains and funerary objects will be reburied on BLM-managed lands administered by the Kanab Field Office in Kane County, Utah. (3/20/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-WY. The Lander Field Office expects to initiate a 30-day public scoping period for a wild horse gather in the North Lander Wild Horse Herd Management Area



(HMA) Complex. The North Lander Complex is located in central Wyoming and is made up of the Conant Creek, Dishpan Butte, Muskrat Basin and Rock Creek Mountain HMAs. The current appropriate management level (AML) for the complex is 320-536 mature horses; its current estimated population is 1,134 horses. The environmental assessment will analyze long-term solutions to bring the population down to the AML and keep it within the low and high AML range. Actions being considered to accomplish these objectives include but are not limited to: vasectomizing a portion of the stallions within the complex; reducing the reproducing population through the use of gelding and adjusted sex ratios; creating limited-reproducing herds using some combination of gelding, spay and/or segregation; and using the fertility control drug GonaCon in conjunction with one of the previously mentioned treatments. There is not a North Lander Complex gather currently on the national gather schedule. The Lander Field Office intends to have the NEPA completed should gather opportunities become available. Due to the inherent controversy associated with wild horse gathers, there will be public and media interest in this scoping period. (4/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-WY expects to publish the Notice of Availability for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Normally Pressured Lance (NPL) Project. The Final EIS is currently under review by Washington and BLM-WY needs approval of the NEPA before advancing the Federal Register package in compliance with WO IM-2018-028. The proposed project includes drilling up to 3,500 directional natural gas wells over a 10-year period on approximately 140,000 acres. The NPL project is projected to yield between 3.5 to 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and between 17.5 to 140 million barrels of oil over the estimated 40-year life of the project. Project revenues are estimated at \$17.8 billion with federal royalties amounting to about \$2.2 billion, of which about \$1.1 billion would go to the State of Wyoming. The project would also bring about 954 full time jobs to the region during development. (2/21/18)

**[NEW] Late May.** BLM-CO. The Grand Junction Field Office plans to announce a decision to approve the proposed “Palisade Plunge” trail. The proposed 30-mile non-motorized trail is a collaborative effort between the BLM, U.S Forest Service Grand Mesa Ranger District, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Town of Palisade, and the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association. The Palisade Plunge is one of the Colorado Governor’s “Colorado 16” projects to support trails and promote outdoor recreation in the state. (5/4/18)

**[NEW] Late May.** BLM-CO. The Grand Junction Field Office will release the oil and gas leasing environmental assessment for South Shale Ridge, which includes 16 parcels totaling approximately 23,157 acres north of Grand Junction in Mesa County for a 30-day public review. Oil and gas leasing in the area was successfully challenged in 2005 with leasing remanded until the Grand Junction Resource Management Plan (RMP) was updated to address a 1997 Wilderness inventory. The updated Grand Junction RMP was finalized in 2015. (5/4/18)

**Late May.** BLM-ID. The Boise District is completing an environmental analysis to authorize the use of 18 herbicide active ingredients as authorized by the BLM in the 2016 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Aminopyralid, Fluroxypyr, and Rimsulfuron on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and the 2007 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The forthcoming decision will determine how noxious weeds

and invasive plants will be managed on public lands within the Boise District. The Decision is expected to be signed in late May, pending completion of Section 7 consultation. (3/20/18)

**Late May.** BLM-MT/DK. A March 23, 2018, order by the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana identified National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) deficiencies in the Miles City Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the Buffalo (Wyoming) RMP. The court directed the BLM and plaintiffs to attempt to reach an agreement no later than May 23, 2018, and to prepare an expedited schedule for preparation of a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for both RMPs. Due to the court-identified NEPA deficiencies, the BLM anticipates postponing the scheduled June 12, 2018, oil and gas lease sale for 217 nominated oil and gas lease parcels within the Miles City Field Office. The BLM expects to make a final decision on the postponement and make the decision public by the end of May. (3/30/18)

**Late May.** BLM-WY. The Buffalo Field Office will release the I-90 Corridor Travel Management Draft Environmental Assessment. The release of the Draft EA will initiate a public scoping period that will end in June or July. Two public meetings will also be held during this period, the dates of which have not yet been determined. On March 8, the BLM began issuing letters to affected landowners and grazing lessees, informing them of the BLM's desire to obtain easements and/or exchanges, which will assist the BLM in designating travel routes to provide easier public access to BLM lands for recreational opportunities. In the effort to be a good neighbor, the Field Office is respecting the demanding schedules of working ranches as it continues to work with them to determine their access needs and their interest in facilitating enhanced public access. The BLM has briefed county commissioners and congressional representatives in routine meetings. The goal of these letters is to open dialogue regarding potential easements/exchanges and come to mutually beneficial agreements with affected landowners. (3/1/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will release a Draft Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Colorado River between Parshall and State Bridge for a 30-day public review period. The RAMP addresses alternatives to better manage increasing use in this area, which sees more than 90,000 float-boaters and anglers each season. Alternatives include adding unlimited day-use permits, expanding a developed campground and designating river campsites. (3/16/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Little Snake Field Office and Northwest District plan to announce a public scoping period in late April or early May for a summer bait-trap wild horse gather in the Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area (HMA). The proposed gather is under review in Washington, D.C. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 163 and 362 wild horses. The BLM estimates the population in the HMA exceeds 700 horses. The Field Office and district have been working closely with a local partner group—the Sand Wash Advocacy Team—to treat mares with fertility control to slow the population growth. (3/16/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office has prepared a Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement evaluating an exchange of certain Federal Lands for properties owned by Galloway, Inc., owners of the Blue Valley Ranch. Under the proposal, the BLM would convey approximately 1,489 acres of public land in Grand County to Blue Valley Ranch in exchange for 1,830 acres of privately held land in Summit and Grand counties. If

approved the exchange would allow the BLM to improve public access, facilitate recreation and increase big-game winter range in the area. The field office is planning to publish in the Federal Register in spring 2018. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1955

#### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

The week of May 21, BOEM expects to participate in a tentative meeting with the State of California and DOD regarding offshore wind off the coast of California. (4/6/18)

**[NEW]** By May 21, BOEM intends to publish a notice in the Federal Register which will extend the comment period of the Atlantic (Offshore Wind) Leasing Path Forward Request for Feedback (RFF) by an additional 45 days to July 5. (5/4/18)

**[UPDATE]** By the end of May 2018, BOEM expects to publish a Request for Competitive Interest for an area proposed to be used for a right-of-way (ROW) project called Atlantic Link. Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc. filed an application on May 31, 2017 (revised August 22, and September 26), for a ROW grant in support of a proposed project connecting onshore wind and hydro power in Canada to the Massachusetts market via a 350 mile HvDC submarine cable traversing the OCS. Emera, parent company to Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc., has recently expressed an interest in slowing down their project timetable. The notice is in surnaming with ASLM.

**[UPDATE]** By late May, BOEM could issue permits for Atlantic G&G activities. In May, BOEM expects that NMFS will publish its Endangered Species Act Biological Opinion for eight Atlantic G&G permit applications under review by BOEM. In testimony on April 26, NMFS indicated it will issue the IHAs in a few weeks, and after the BiOp is complete. It will not issue an IHA for one of the applications, submitted by WesternGeco, as they have not completed the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) consultation for BOEM's permit process. States were notified of the Austin Bridgeport airborne gravity and magnetic permit for CZMA purposes on February 22, 2018. On March 26, 2018, the State of Florida requested through NOAA an unlisted activity review for Austin Bridgeport's permit. NOAA has indicated that the decision to grant the State of Florida a consistency review will be made by May 23, 2018. BOEM's decision on the permits should take approximately three weeks after BiOp completion, and will include issuance of an EA for each permit. (4/12/18)

In May 2018, BOEM expects to issue a decision on approval of a Site Assessment Plan for installation of a meteorological buoy to characterize the wind resource on Vineyard Wind's lease located offshore Massachusetts. The decision package has been prepared but is pending submission of appropriate supplemental financial assurance and annual rental payment before issuance. (4/27/18)

In May 2018, Deepwater Wind is expected to submit a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) for their South Fork project located offshore New York. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for this COP is in surnaming. (4/27/18)

#### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

**The Arctic Rule:** The ASLM is currently reviewing documents to plan a path forward for potential revisions to the Arctic Rule.

**[UPDATE] The Proposed Production Safety Systems Final Rule (PSSR) (AA37)** has cleared the Solicitor's office and was caught in a "on again off again" review by OMB. The final decision is that they are now deeming this rule revision to be of national significance and therefore are asking for the entire package to be submitted to them for review. OMB is allowed a minimum of 60 days for their review, however, that may be extended to 90 days. Inasmuch as this rule in 2016 was not declared of national significance, we don't anticipate any issues with OMB reviewing this rule with limited changes from the 2016 version. Just as a reminder, this is the Final Rule.

**[UPDATE] Consideration of Pilot Program for ACT Program (Accelerating Compliance Together)** - BSEE is currently undertaking a deep dive on data of compliance times with incidents of non-compliance and will be requesting a briefing to the ASLM on this innovative concept to radically accelerate compliance with incidents of non-compliance without costing a single taxpayer penny. A PowerPoint was previously provided for ASLM awareness. A briefing has been rescheduled for **May 9** with ASLM. We look forward to providing the details on this innovative approach.

#### **Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement**

**[UPDATE]** On April 25, 2018, the Governor of Tennessee signed into law legislation initiating efforts for Tennessee to obtain primacy over the implementation of SMCRA in the State. Senate bill (SB) 0686, and companion House bill (HB) 0571, introduced in the Tennessee legislature in February 2017, was passed through the legislature and sent to the Governor for signature on April 18, 2018. OSMRE leadership and management have met with the Office of the Governor staff and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to discuss and provide information on financial, permitting, and staffing requirements for the SMCRA Title V program. According to the information available on the Tennessee Legislature's website, the development of a Tennessee program is contingent upon full Federal funding being made available for development. This is notable in that the State legislature was made aware, as is reflected in the debate on the floor of the legislature, that SMCRA provides a limitation of 50 percent funding for the development of a primacy program. We are aware of efforts currently underway in the U.S. Congress to include specific language authorizing the full Federal funding of the costs for developing a SMCRA primacy program. (4/30/2018)

**[UPDATE]** The Office of the Solicitor is preparing alternative enforcement activities, e.g., subpoenas, related to (b) (5) (a subsidiary of (b) (5) headquartered in (b) (5)). Alternative enforcement is the process of seeking individual civil penalties and/or asking the U.S. Attorney's Office to seek injunctive relief against individual officers or agents of a corporation to hold them individually liable for SMCRA violations. This process is used when OSMRE's primary enforcement tools do not result in compliance with SMCRA. Until January 2017, the (b) (5) (b) (5), was on the Board of (b) (5); he still retains 21 percent ownership of the company and could be found to be a controlling officer. Members of (b) (5) family serve as company officers. The alternative enforcement referral packages stem from violations, associated enforcement actions, and the company's failure to take any action to abate

violations on two sites in Tennessee. Further action may be necessary for multiple other violations and enforcement issues. Discussions with other Appalachian Region states, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, indicate widespread enforcement issues with companies affiliated with (b) (5) and his family members. The states are contemplating taking similar actions. (4/30/2018)

On or about May 18, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Bull Mountains Mine No. 1's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Signal Peak Energy's Bull Mountains Mine No. 1 is an underground coal mine located in Musselshell and Yellowstone Counties, MT. The mine employs 260 people and produces approximately 6 – 10 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/15/2018)

**[NEW]** By May 22, 2018, OSMRE will make available \$115M in AML Pilot Funds in accordance with the Consolidated and Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141). The recipients will include the six Appalachian States (Pennsylvania - \$25 million, Kentucky - \$25 million, West Virginia \$25 million; Ohio - \$10 million, Alabama - \$10 million; Virginia - \$10 million) and the Hopi, Navajo and Crow Tribes will also receive a total of \$10 million.

On or about May 23, OSMRE plans to submit the Sufco Mine's Greens Hollow Lease Tract mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. The Canyon Fuel Company's Sufco Mine is an underground coal mine located in Sevier and Sanpete Counties, UT. The mine employs 383 people and produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (4/12/2018)

**[NEW]** OSMRE is awaiting the Solicitor's Office sign-off on memorandum to the DOJ recommending settlement of the three Farrell-Cooper cases. On May 1, 2018, the court granted a stay of litigation until May 24, 2018, in one of the cases, pending finalization of the settlement agreement. DOJ needs the Department's recommendation in order to move forward with settlement

**[UPDATE]** On or about May 25, 2018, OSMRE will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the San Juan Mine Deep Lease Extension mining plan modification Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in the Federal Register. OSMRE provided an oral briefing on the DEIS to the Deputy Secretary and other members of the Departmental Review Team as part of the NEPA document clearance process, on May 3, 2018. The briefing was well received and the Deputy Secretary and the Review Team approved moving forward with publication of the NOA and DEIS. The San Juan Mine is located approximately 4 miles northeast of Waterflow and 15 miles west of Farmington, in San Juan County, New Mexico. The mine employs 360 people and currently produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/28/2018)

By May 30, 2018, OSMRE expects the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a lease for the Oklahoma Federal Lands: Pollyanna #8 coal mine permit revision. The applicant's existing coal reserves are expected to be depleted in less than 12 months; therefore, the additional coal reserve is needed to ensure continuous operations. BLM has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the coal lease on the expansion of the underground mine

and is expected to have the draft lease completed in the upcoming weeks. With finalization of the leasing documents, OSMRE will be working on the development of a Mine Plan Decision Document (MPDD). Based upon OSMRE's close coordination with BLM during the development of the EA for the lease, we anticipate being able to adopt large portions of their EA for our MPDD. Future steps will include evaluation of the BLM EA for determination of NEPA adequacy, developing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EA, if needed, expected to be completed within 2 weeks following draft lease, followed by developing the EA and posting it for public review. Depending upon how much of the BLM EA that is adopted, the MPDD could be completed by July 31, 2018. (4/3/2018)

By May 30, 2018, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for the Liberty #8 coal mine. The new lease by application covers 1,620 acres of surface mining activities. OSMRE is expected to be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss with the mining company processing procedures, outline NEPA responsibilities, the development of a schedule associated with leasing and the process of a mining plan decision document. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **Bureau of Land Management**

**[UPDATED] June 1.** BLM-ID. Four Rivers Field Office is working with the Nature Conservancy on the planned donation of an 80-acre conservation easement associated with the Hixon Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse Area of Critical Environmental Concern that would expand protections on habitat for the Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse. The Nature Conservancy is purchasing a conservation easement that they intend to donate to BLM for long-term management. This is expected to be finalized by June 1. (4/10/18)

**June 1.** BLM-ID. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have requested and funded an investigation into the 1873 boundary survey of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Specifically, the Tribes assert the easterly boundary of the reservation should have been 30 miles further east, resulting in a shortage of approximately 600,000 acres. The Cadastral Survey investigation has affirmed the 1873 locations of the boundaries, with only minor differences of interpretation of the controlling natural features. Finalization of the report is anticipated June 1, 2018. However, it is unlikely that the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will drop their claim for many reasons: First, all metes-and-bounds descriptions are subject to differing interpretations. Second, their claims have been refuted in the past and their pursuit of compensation has persisted. Third, the report will indicate several interpretations of the written description, with the final finding being that the 1873 surveyor applied one interpretation to the conditions on-the-ground, and that interpretation was acceptable to the Surveyor General. The appropriate time to raise a claim pertaining to boundary disputes is when the "error" is first discovered. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] June 4.** BLM-UT. The BLM Moab Field Office intends to initiate scoping and hold public meetings for the Canyon Rims Travel Management Plan effort, which is 90,954 acres

in the Hatch Point area, in northern San Juan County. Two public meetings are scheduled: June 13 in Moab and June 14 in Monticello. This travel plan is scheduled to be completed by May 2021, as required by the May 31, 2017 Resource Management Plan Settlement Agreement. (4/4/18)

**June 7.** BLM-CO will hold its quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The BLM is offering 64 parcels totaling approximately 58,694 acres in Jackson, Moffat, Rio Blanco and Routt counties. Approximately 30,898 acres are on Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, which could generate controversy. Oil and gas leasing and development in Colorado generated an estimated \$2.9 billion in economic output in fiscal year 2016. (4/24/18)

**June 14.** BLM-CA. The 90-day public comment period will end for the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft Land Use Plan Amendment for the West Mojave Route Network Project. The Draft Supplemental EIS addresses proposed solutions for adaptive and responsible travel management planning and recreational use — including off-highway vehicle access — within the West Mojave planning area, while protecting important resources. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] June 21.** BLM-ES will hold a competitive online oil and gas lease sale of 24 parcels, all of which are split estate with private surface. The combined parcels total 2,202.87 acres and are located in Cleburne and Van Buren Counties, Arkansas. The sale noticed was published on April 10, beginning a 10-day protest period that ended April 20. No protests have yet been received. BLM-ES expects to issue an amendment to the sale notice to add a split-estate 5-acre tract in Louisiana to the June sale, prior to the 45-day posting period requirement. (4/11/18)

**[NEW] June 21 – 24.** BLM-AK. The Glennallen Field Office will partner with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing to host wounded veterans in the Delta Wild and Scenic River corridor. This event provides physical and emotional rehabilitation for wounded soldiers, veterans, and their families. Participants will exercise fly-fishing techniques honed over winter and experience the rich, aquatic habitat of the Delta Wild and Scenic River and Tangle Lakes Archaeological District. [www.projecthealingwaters.org](http://www.projecthealingwaters.org) (5/4/18)

**[NEW] June 24.** BLM-ID. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), through the BLM, is requesting approval of a Public Land Order (PLO) that would withdraw 107.02 acres of USFS-administered lands within the Salmon-Challis National Forest from settlement, sale, location or entry under the public land laws, including the U.S. mining laws, for a period of 20 years. The purpose of the withdrawal is to conserve the hydrologic values and fishery in the Salmon River watershed through protection of the USFS Dump Creek Diversion Ditch, a \$2.4-million canal that is part of a larger infrastructure network designed to protect recreational opportunities on the Salmon River. The land was segregated from the mining laws through 81 CFR 41333, which will automatically expire on June 24, 2018, after which the lands will be open to location and entry under the U.S. mining laws. No controversy regarding the withdrawal is expected. The USFS completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and offered to hold public meetings through local papers and the Federal Register. No groups or individuals requested a public meeting, and no substantial comments were received on the EA. (5/4/18)



**June 30.** BLM-CA. Bakersfield Field Office staff will participate in a U.S. Forest Service-led public meeting on four Applications for Permit to Drill in the Sespe oilfield in Fillmore, Calif. The Forest Service is the lead federal agency conducting the NEPA and the meeting is expected to generate much public interest, including previous interest from U.S. Rep. Julia Brownley's (CA-26-D) office, due to the wells being in a national forest and near a California condor sanctuary. (2/9/18)

**In June.** BLM-CA. The Bureau of Land Management is looking to publish in the Federal Register a 60-day notice to seek public comment on a proposed direct sale of 70 acres of public land in San Bernardino County to OMYA Inc., a global producer of calcium carbonate and distributor of specialty chemicals. The proposed land sale would allow the company to continue mining the high-calcium limestone deposits in the area through 2055, resolve past unauthorized mining operations, and meet OMYA's need for additional land. This proposal would also be consistent with the Amended Mining and Reclamation Plan approved by the County of San Bernardino. Located in the vicinity of Lucerne Valley, OMYA Inc.'s mining operation generates more than \$800,000 per year in county taxes and provides jobs for approximately 100 workers from the surrounding communities. (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-CO. The Gunnison Field Office (GFO) is preparing a Notice of Availability (NOA) and preliminary Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on its proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment to assess domestic sheep permit renewals on 16 livestock grazing allotments in Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Juan counties. The EIS evaluates reducing contact between domestic sheep on BLM-managed lands and wild sheep populations to minimize disease transmission. GFO is planning for a June 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval) in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**In June.** BLM-ID. The Four Rivers Field Office is working with the Land Trust of Treasure Valley (LTTV) on the acquisition of 560 acres in the Boise Foothills. The LTTV purchased the property in February 2018 and will transfer the parcel to the BLM through a bargain sale agreement. BLM Idaho intends to use FY17 Land and Water Conservation Fund Recreation Access funds for this purchase. These funds were available because the appraisal for another FY17 project came in lower than expected, which resulted in excess funds. The property is a critical piece that will provide public access to public lands in the Stack Rock area from the Avimor trail system. This property was identified in the Ridge to Rivers 10-Year Management Plan (in which the BLM is a managing partner) as a high-priority objective for obtaining public access for hunters and other recreationists. The property is also important winter range for big game, especially elk, and is in the most popular big game hunting unit in Idaho. The LTTV issued a press release on April 4 regarding their purchase of this property. A BLM press release will likely be issued in June when scoping is initiated, and again when the purchase takes place in late summer or early fall 2018. This final release could include statements from the Secretary, the BLM, the City of Boise, and/or Avimor. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-MT/DK. The Missoula Field Office will hold the Black Sheep Timber Sale to salvage timber from BLM lands within the perimeter of the Little Hogback fire near Ram Mountain. The Little Hogback fire burned 43,733 acres in July 2017, of which 3,766 acres was on BLM-administered lands managed by the Missoula Field Office. The Field Office will be salvaging fire-burned and beetle-killed timber from 250 acres within the fire perimeter. The



Field Office anticipates a yield of 1,500 to 2,000 MBF, which equates to about 500 log truckloads. This sale is not expected to generate any controversy. (3/16/18)

**[UPDATED] In June.** BLM-NV. The Secretary of the Interior will be requested to sign the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 17 projects for funding. There are two Nevada signing event options: 1) Southern Nevada at Bureau of Reclamation for their Round 17 Capital Improvement Program (more than \$10 million at the dam); or 2) Northern Nevada at BLM-NV land acquisition (\$4.5 million - providing new recreation opportunity) and nearby fuels projects (\$5 million). The Executive Committee for SNPLMA requested the Secretary of the Interior approve \$78,002,276 of funding, including \$5 million for a Special Account Reserve and an additional \$3.2 million for SNPLMA Round 16B Craig Ranch Regional Park—a 20.57-acre acquisition project. SNPLMA funding advances the Secretary's priorities by creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt; sustainably developing our energy and natural resources; restoring trust and being a good neighbor; protecting our people; striking a regulatory balance; modernizing our infrastructure; achieving our goals; and leading our team forward. (3/23/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT. The BLM Moab Field Office intends to issue an Environmental Assessment (EA) for public comment on Lisbon Valley Mining Company's proposal to expand two excavation pits and add a buried electrical line at the Lisbon Valley Copper Mine. Total additional disturbance on BLM land is approximately 37 acres. Mining was first approved in 1997 and current mine operations cover over 1,100 acres of BLM, State, and private lands. The BLM anticipates the consultation process will include a Memorandum of Agreement. The project is not within the boundary of Bears Ears National Monument, and historically, projects at the Lisbon Valley Mine have not been controversial with the public. (4/11/18)

**In June or July.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will finalize the Skull Valley land exchange. This exchange is a single-transaction, multi-parcel exchange wherein the United States would convey 12,603.27 acres of Federal land for 11,586.32 acres of non-Federal land. The exchange would consolidate Federal and non-Federal ownership, provide management efficiency, and increase public access opportunities. The BLM would acquire 3,598 acres of mule deer crucial range, 1,417 acres of pronghorn crucial range, a 120-acre portion of the Pony Express National Historic Trail, and 587 acres of inholdings within the Cedar Mountain Wilderness Area. This acquisition of lands in a wilderness area would be important for providing improved public access to an area that is popular with hunters, minimizing the complexity of BLM's fire suppression responsibility in a fire-prone area, and reducing the burden to a private landowner with inholdings in a wilderness area. (4/11/18)

**July 8.** BLM-CO. The 90-day public review period will close for the Little Snake Field Office's 1,870-mile route inventory across 638,195 acres of BLM-managed land. The review period began on April 9, 2018. This is the third and final Field Office travel management area to undergo this first public step of travel management. The public is being asked to review the inventory for accuracy and completeness, giving them the opportunity to help finalize a working map of the routes for the planning effort. The public will have several opportunities for review as the process to designate routes progresses over the next year. (3/30/18)

**July 9.** BLM-UT. The Fillmore Field Office expects to approve a Plan of Operations for the Scipio Pass Quarry located in Millard County. A Plan of Operations for this new project was submitted on April 17, 2018, by Clyde Companies. The Fillmore Field Office will provide comments to Clyde prior to the regulatory 30-day deadline. The 120-acre quarry will produce limestone aggregate for highway construction projects, so it has potential for local employment and therefore, local support. This project may become controversial due to its size and proximity to Interstate 15 at Scipio Pass and it is anticipated that environmental organizations and Tribes may not support the project. Potential issues include visual, cultural, air quality, and wildlife. The Plan of Operations and subsequent Environmental Assessment will include public review and comment. (4/26/18)

**July 20 – 30.** BLM-CO will issue the sale notice and 10-day protest period for the September 6, 2018, oil and gas lease sale for 25 parcels totaling approximately 217,622 acres in Huerfano, Kiowa, Lincoln, Washington and Weld Counties. Eleven parcels totaling approximately 18,358 acres in Huerfano County outside and east of Great Sand Dunes National Park's boundary have received significant media coverage. The Huerfano County parcels, because of their proximity to Great Sand Dunes National Park, generated controversy after the public comment period for the sale's environmental assessment was announced. Controversy over these parcels is expected to continue. The announcement date and length of the protest period follows guidance in IM 2018-034. (4/4/18)

**In July.** BLM-NM. The BLM expects to publish the Farmington Mancos-Gallup Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) and begin a 90-day public comment period. The plan will address issues relating to oil and gas development in the Mancos Shale/Gallup Formation. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is a joint lead agency in this planning effort. The scope of BLM and BIA decisions being evaluated are limited to fluid mineral leasing and development; lands and realty (including land use authorizations for BLM); vegetation (including vegetation treatments for BLM); and lands with wilderness characteristics (BLM only). Stakeholder positions vary on the Mancos-Gallup RMPA and include support for additional opportunities for fluid mineral development as well as concerns about protecting cultural resources associated with the Chaco culture (greater Chaco landscape); negative impacts to Native communities (traditional lifeways); and potential impacts to air, water, and land health. Approximately 95% of public comments reflect public interest in preserving the Chaco landscape, protecting Native communities, and ensuring healthy water and air supplies. The Mancos-Gallup RMPA planning area has approximately 2.2 million acres of Federal mineral estate and 1.3 million acres of BLM-managed surface lands. The RMPA will also support BIA decisions on approximately 1.6 million acres, where BIA has mineral leasing authority. (4/26/18)

#### Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

**[UPDATE]** In early June 2018, BOEM and BSEE expect to publish a Notice of Availability for a joint draft Programmatic EA for routine and ongoing oil and gas activities occurring in the Southern California Planning Area. BSEE has commenced the NOA surnaming process including a 30-day public comment period for the draft EA. The Draft Programmatic EA is expected to be published later this Spring and the Final Programmatic EA should be complete by the end of FY 2018. (4/6/18)

On June 15, BOEM will meet with representatives from the State of Hawaii to discuss potential paths forward for the competitive planning and leasing process for offshore wind following a February 2017 response from DoD excluding much of the June 2016 Call for Information and Nominations Area as part of DoD's mission compatibility assessment. (4/27/18)

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

[UPDATE] Pending a state approval of the permit revision on or around June 15, OSMRE plans to submit the Falkirk Mine's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM on or around June 25. Falkirk Mining Company's Falkirk Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in McLean County, ND. The mine employs 412 full-time employees and 118 temporary employees and produces approximately 8 – 8.5 million tons of coal per year. (3/15/2018)

On March 6, 2018, OSMRE was notified by BLM of a new lease by application for Federal coal in Haskell County, Oklahoma. **Evans-McCurtain Mine** would include approximately 1,300 acres. BLM is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for Evans-McCurtain by May 30, 2018. The remaining reserves on the proposed lease are recoverable only by underground methods. Coal thickness will dictate the use of continuous miner units or, possibly, a plow longwall. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

#### Awareness

##### Bureau of Land Management

**August 1.** BLM-MT/DK. The Western Montana District is proposing to complete a fee purchase acquisition using approved Land and Water Conservation Fund funding in the amount of \$1,025,000. The privately owned 307.57-acre parcel is located 23 miles south of Ennis, Montana. The parcel lies adjacent to BLM-administered lands (Dillon Field Office) within the Upper River Special Recreation Management Area along the Madison River. There would be increased access to 880 acres of BLM-managed lands, which would provide approximately 4.5 miles of additional access to the Madison River. The proposed date for this acquisition is Aug. 1, 2018. Willing landowners would like to complete the transaction as soon as possible. The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Madison County Commissioners support the BLM acquiring the private parcel. An appraisal, NEPA analysis, and Endangered Species Act work have been completed. No controversy is expected. (3/7/18)

##### Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

Marine Hydrokinetic offshore Oregon: BOEM is considering issuance of a lease to the Northwest National Marine Renewable Energy Center at Oregon State University (NNMREC-OSU) for the P MEC-SETS, a marine and hydrokinetic (MHK) test site offshore Newport, Oregon. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on the proposed project since it is a MHK project requiring a FERC license to operate. BOEM will be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document that will address both lease and license issuance. In Dec 2017, DOE awarded a \$40 million grant to P MEC-SETS to complete design, permitting and

construction on the national wave energy testing facility. Oregon State has submitted a draft application to FERC and the region will be reviewing. (4/27/18)

As soon as possible, BOEM would like to publish the 2017 Comprehensive Inventory of OCS Oil and Natural Gas Resources Report to Congress. This report is required by Section 357 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. It directs the Secretary of the Interior to provide a report to Congress within 6 months of the date of enactment (i.e., Aug. 8, 2005), with updates of at least every 5 years. This report is an update to the 2013 report. It is currently in surnaming with ASLM.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND BUDGET**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On May 14-18, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, with the delegated authority of the Assistant Secretary, Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings.

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)**

From May 15-17, the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) Executive Director Jamie Reaser will attend an invitation-only workshop hosted by the Moore Foundation and Conservation X Labs in Lake Tahoe, NV to envision technological solutions to barriers in freshwater conservation, including the threats posed by aquatic invasive species (no press). (05/02/2018)

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

On May 14, based on the vacancy of the Human Capital and Diversity Deputy Assistant Secretary (HCD DAS) position and the Policy and Environmental Management (PEM) DAS position, PDAS Scott Cameron plans to sign a memo temporarily detailing the offices from the HCD DAS and the PEM DAS to the Deputy Assistant Secretaries that will formally inherit those offices once Congress approves DOI's FY 2019 budget request. The effective date of the detailing would be May 28. (04/25/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Human Capital and Diversity**

*[NEW]* In mid-to-late May, the Office of Human Resources (OHR) is expecting to release the second issue of *InHR Quarterly*, Interior's workforce newsletter. The newsletter showcases the work performed by employees at Interior and provides important updates to the Department's Human Capital community. (05/09/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)**

In early to mid-May, the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) in coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs is tentatively scheduled to rollout a Fuels/Active Management communications

strategy. Work is ongoing with DOI Communications and the BIA to highlight Tribal successes stories. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 14, 2018 at 11:00 AM the Department will host its 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Ceremony in conjunction with National Police Week. The Director of Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES) Darren Cruzan is the master of ceremonies and the Secretary of the Interior is the keynote speaker for the event. Each DOI law enforcement bureau/office, and the US Forest Service will present a floral wreath during the ceremony to honor their fallen officers. The DOI-Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony is open to the law enforcement community, DOI employees, and the public wishing to honor current, retired, and fallen law enforcement officers of the Department. (05/09/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

From June 18-20, PDAS Scott Cameron will be in Denver and Wyoming to participate in an Interior Business Center (IBC) building reopening with the GSA Administrator at the Denver Federal Center, participate in an employee listening session and related activities associated with implementing the PMB workplace harassment action plan, and visiting with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Defense (DOD), and Wyoming state and private partners on cooperative rangeland management of invasive weeds. (05/02/2018)

### **Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)**

On June 6, 2018, the Royalty Policy Committee will conduct its next public meeting, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. On the 5th, the sectors will meet to review their presentations for the public meeting. On the 6th the full Committee will meet to present recommendations, hold public comment, debate, and vote on recommendations to the Secretary. The Federal Register notice is being routed. (05/02/2018)

### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)**

On May 22, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the Wildland Fire IT Executive Board Meeting at the Main Interior Building. (05/02/2018)

From May 29 - June 1, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Wildfire Committee Meeting in Napa, CA to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. (04/18/2018)

From June 4-7, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) National Indian Timber Symposium in Ocean Shores, WA to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. (05/02/2018)

From June 11-14, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the Wildland Fire Leadership Council Meeting in Colorado Springs, CO to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. (05/02/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

From May 30-31, the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) will participate in the annual national meeting for Emergency Support Function (ESF) - Protection of Natural and Cultural Resources and Historic Properties (ESF #11) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Patriot's Plaza Building in Washington, DC. The meeting will focus on updates from each of the agencies that comprise ESF #11, as well as discussions on how to improve support to States, Tribes, and Territories during FEMA-led activations. The OEPC and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will be presenting on DOI's programs and capabilities that provide support to ESF #11. (03/28/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Human Capital and Diversity

**[UPDATE]** On July 4, 2018 the Honor Awards Convocation will be held in the Main Interior Building Auditorium. 62 employees will be recognized for their outstanding contributions and achievements. Consistent with Departmental policy, the only awardees recognized at the convocation includes recipients of the Distinguished Service Awards, Valor Awards, Safety and Health Awards of Excellence, Aviation Safety Awards, and Citizen's Awards for Bravery. (05/09/2018)

**Awareness**

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

**[NEW]** On May 2, Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt raised the Department's charge card micro-purchase threshold to \$10,000. Concurrently, the Office of Acquisition and Property Management (PAM) issued Department of the Interior Acquisition, Assistance and Asset Policy (DOI-AAAP)-0148, *Class Deviation - Increasing the Micro-purchase Threshold and the Simplified Acquisition Threshold*. The DOI policy formalizes DOI's micro-purchase threshold change to \$10,000, and increases the simplified acquisition threshold to \$250,000. The policy also implements a change to a portion of the micro-purchase threshold definition in the Federal Acquisition Regulation to increase the micro-purchase threshold for acquisitions from institutions of higher education or related or affiliated nonprofit entities, or from nonprofit research organizations or independent research institutes, to \$10,000. (05/09/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 7, 2018, the Deputy Secretary conducted a review, with senior leadership and related managers, on progress being made on the Department's six Agency Priority (Performance) Goals. The resulting progress report, including any actions needed to better ensure success, will be provided to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for posting on [www.performance.gov](http://www.performance.gov). (05/09/2018)

*[NEW]* The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) recently announced a verification review of “Inspection of the U.S. Department of the Interior's Occupational Safety and Health and Workers' Compensation Programs” (2015-CR-001). The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Department has implemented the recommendations made in the report. Given that two of the eight recommendations in the report remain open with targeted closure dates in FY 2019, the OIG will limit its scope to the six recommendations that the Office of Financial Management has reported as closed. (05/09/2018)

*[NEW]* The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently released the final report “Single Audit Quality Control Review of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission for FY 2016” (2017-FIN-028) in accordance with its responsibilities for audit work performed by non-Federal auditors on Federal programs. The independent public accountant, Government & Non-Profit Audit Group, PLC, (GNP) performed the single audit. In these “audit the auditor” engagements, the OIG’s objective is to determine whether the independent public accountant performs audits (of grantees receiving Departmental funds) in accordance with established standards, including requirements within 2 Code of Federal Regulations part 200. Based on the OIG’s review of the single audit-reporting package and the related audit documentation, the OIG assigned an overall rating of *fail* to GNP's work. No further action is necessary. (05/09/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR WATER AND SCIENCE**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tim Petty will be in the DC area the week of May 13-19. Much of his time will be focused on Dr. Reilly’s arrival at USGS, where Tim will participate in the USGS annual award ceremony in Reston on May 15 and Town Hall meeting on May 17. On Wednesday, May 16, Tim will host an informal meeting of his counterparts at EPA, USDA, NOAA, and ASA-Civil Works.

On May 13-19, the new USGS Director, Dr. James Reilly, will be in Reston, Va./Washington, D.C. Dr. Reilly will report to Interior May 14 to be sworn in and processed. He will arrive at USGS National Center in Reston on May 15.

On May 14, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman will speak at the opening of Lake Nighthorse in Durango, Colorado. On May 15, she will travel to Denver where she will address the Reclamation Construction and Geology Conference Workshop. Then on May 16 and 17, Commissioner Burman will be in Sacramento, California, for meetings with Reclamation staff, Central Valley Project water contractors and stakeholders.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

Reclamation has completed work to address comments on the Central North Dakota Environmental Assessment (EA). Reclamation released the draft EA for a second public

comment period on April 17. The comment period was originally scheduled to close May 2, but by request from the State of Missouri it was extended to May 17. (3/26/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 13 and May 25, Reclamation is planning to announce the two projects selected to receive funding for drought contingency planning. Drought contingency planning funding is available for applicants interested in developing a new drought plan or updating an existing drought plan. The Assistant Secretary of Water and Science is reviewing the selected projects. (4/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 13 and May 25, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the data app prize competition. Reclamation, in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, is seeking the development of an application framework to support electronic data collection and capture across a diverse range of data collection situations using mobile devices. (3/26/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 13 and May 25, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the Long-Term Corrosion Protection of Existing Hydraulic Steel Structures prize competition. This prize competition sought ideas for long-term corrosion protection for large, hydraulic steel structures beyond the protection provided by available coatings and cathodic protection. (3/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 13 and May 25, Reclamation is planning to publish the remaining completed Rural Water Supply Program Appraisal Reports. Timing is based on when the notice is published in the Federal Register. A news release will be issued in conjunction with the notice. (1/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 13 and 25, Reclamation will publish the Title XVI and WIIN funding opportunity announcement. Updated criteria for this funding opportunity were previously published for public comment on March 12. Title XVI provides financial assistance to local water agencies for the planning, design, and construction of water reclamation and reuse projects. (4/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 14, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office and the City of Durango will host a dedication ceremony celebrating opening Lake Nighthorse to recreation. Commissioner Burman will be speaking. Lake Nighthorse is part of the Animas-La Plata Project located near Durango, Colorado. The reservoir is currently open on the weekends for non-motorized use. The WCAO is working closely with the City on: preparing to open to motorized use on May 15, construction of additional basic recreation facilities, and the dedication ceremony. A media advisory was sent on May 3, inviting media to the ceremony and a press release will be sent after the event. Local media is interested in Lake Nighthorse and WCAO will continue to work with them. (3/09/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 14, Reclamation expects to issue a news release announcing the release of environmental documents for Alameda County Water District's (ACWD) rubber dam fish ladder project, located in California. ACWD would construct a fish passage facility allowing steelhead access to lower Alameda Creek. The proposed action will improve anadromous fish passage in



the urban reach of the Alameda Creek watershed while maintaining ACWD's water supply operations at its groundwater recharge facilities. (5/7/2018)

**[NEW]** The week of May 14, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the release of a draft environmental document for public review on a Long-Term Warren Act contract for the Sacramento Suburban Water District (comments due June 16). Execution of the "wet-year only" contract would enable the delivery of up to 29,000 acre-feet per year of Middle-Fork Project water through Folsom Reservoir for municipal and industrial uses in northern Sacramento County California. (5/7/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 14, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the release of final environmental documents on the issuance of land use authorizations to Caltrans for the State Route 269 bridge project. State Route 269 is located north of the City of Huron, in Fresno County, California, and is subject to periodic flooding from the Arroyo Pasajero Creek during major storm events. (05/13-19/2018)

**[NEW]** Between May 14-15, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office will release a final Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment about a contract to use Grand Valley Project facilities, located in Grand Junction, Colorado, for conveyance of non-project water. The contract will allow the facilities to carry an additional 5,000 acre-feet of water a year for 5 years when it is determined that there is excess capacity in the project facilities. The project facilities will deliver the water to the head of the 15-Mile Reach for the benefit of the endangered fish. A press release will be sent to local media. (05/07/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 14-18, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office will send out a press release awarding a \$50 million cultural resource contract. The contract will allow Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office and Upper Colorado Region to obtain cultural resource-related services for various projects, including the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, located in New Mexico. The contractors will closely coordinate activities with Western Colorado Area Office archeologists who will conduct field inspections and review all documents under this contract. It is anticipated that project-specific cultural resource work will be awarded under this contract through 2023. Open press. (2/16/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 15, Reclamation, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will participate in an Endangered Species Act Section 7 Reinitiation of Consultation Agency Coordination Team meeting in Grants Pass, Oregon. The topics of discussion will include a hydrologic update, 2018 operations and planning, recent technical team meetings, the current Klamath River dilution flow, as well as, other topics. Media interest is not expected. (5/7/2018)

On or around May 15, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the award of a \$5.9 million contract for the modification of Howard Prairie Dam in Southwestern Oregon. The awardee is the Natt McDougall Company of Tualatin, Oregon. (04/23/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected projects under the Drought Resiliency Project funding opportunity announcement. Through drought resiliency projects

Reclamation will provide funding for projects that will help communities prepare for and respond to drought. (4/9/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected entities to receive funding under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. The funding was announced in a funding opportunity announcement this past fall. It provides funding to develop a watershed management group, fund an existing watershed group, complete watershed restoration planning activities, and design watershed management projects. (4/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 16 and 17, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's Salinity Control staff will participate at the Colorado River Basin Salinity Council and Forum meetings at the Washington County Water Conservancy District Office in St. George, Utah. Upper Colorado Regional Director Brent Rhees, and Lower Colorado Regional Director Terry Fulp have been invited to both meetings. The purpose of the council meeting is to discuss and take appropriate actions regarding the following: Basin States Program created by Public Law 110-246, which amended the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974; responses to the Advisory Council Report; and other items within the jurisdiction of the council. Meetings are open to the public; media generally does not attend. The notice was published on April 26, 2018. (03/19/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 17, Reclamation will host a webinar about its Water Marketing Strategy Grants Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). The webinar will provide an overview of the eligible applicants and projects and the evaluation criteria used to rank the submitted projects. The FOA was published on March 19 and closes on July 17. (05/07/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 18, Reclamation will conduct a second negotiation session with the Sacramento (California) Suburban Water District on contract terms and conditions for a long-term Warren Act contract. The contract will be negotiated for the conveyance of up to 29,000 acre-feet of non-Central Valley Project water per year using excess capacity in Folsom Reservoir. A news release was distributed May 3. (4/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 18, Reclamation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will issue a news release to announce that two pulse flow releases from Whiskeytown Dam into Clear Creek (located in California) will be made in June (beginning June 2) to attract adult spring-run Chinook salmon to upstream Clear Creek habitats for holding and spawning purposes. (05/07/2018)

On May 21 through May 24, Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region will host a bi-annual Power Operations and Maintenance Workshop with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Discussion topics will include technical subjects related to hydro powerplant and pumping facilities operations, maintenance, and engineering activities; best practices; and lessons learned. The event will be held at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, Nevada. No press is expected. (3/12/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 22, the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) will host a webinar/conference call. A *Federal Register* notice was published on May 3. Topics

of discussion will include updates on current basin hydrology, the Adaptive Management Program budget and workplan for fiscal year 2019, possible experiments at Glen Canyon Dam this water year, the status of AMWG membership appointments, and other administrative items as needed. The webinar is open to media and the public. (3/26/2018)

On May 22, Reclamation will conduct a briefing via WebEx, with the Idaho congressional delegation on Idaho water projects, operations and issues. (4/23/2018)

On May 23, members of the Lower Clearwater Exchange Project will be leading a tour of the Lewiston Orchards Water Exchange Project (Lewiston, Idaho) for Trout Unlimited and the Resources Legacy Fund with support from the Nez Perce Tribe, Reclamation and the Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District. Invitations have been extended to representatives from the offices of Sen. Risch, Sen. Crapo, and Rep. Labrador. The water exchange and title transfer are intended to benefit Snake River steelhead, protect natural and cultural resources important to the Nez Perce Tribe, and provide a reliable water supply for the Lewiston Orchard Irrigation District patrons. (4/02/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

[**NEW**] On May 15, the USGS will hold its annual Honor Awards ceremony in the Dallas Peck Auditorium at USGS National Center, Reston, Va. New USGS Director Dr. James Reilly and Deputy Director, Bill Werkheiser will preside. ASWS Tim Petty will also participate by providing opening remarks and presenting awards with Director Reilly. The ceremony will begin at 1:00 p.m. and a morning reception will be hosted by the Director's office for the awardees. (5/3/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 17 USGS will provide a tour of the Alaska Science Center for a group with the Arctic Council Arctic One Health Study. These visitors are invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. One Health is a practical approach to identify, prevent, and mitigate health risks in humans, animals and the environment. The Arctic One Health Study Tour is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and is part of the ongoing effort to operationalize One Health in the Arctic and build international collaborations. The tour will provide an overview of the USGS mission areas, wildlife and environmental disease research programs that inform One Health partnerships in Alaska, a discussion of on-going work with partners in the north and a tour of the ASC genomics lab. Focus is on how USGS provides wildlife and environmental health information for collaborative One Health projects, particularly with agencies concerned with human health and food security and confidence. Stakeholders include U.S. Department of State, Arctic Council and Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Twelve participants from Canada, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden will participate in the tour. The visitors will be accompanied by International Visitor Liaisons with U.S. Department of State. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] This week, a Federal Register notice will be posted announcing the upcoming meeting of the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC). NGAC, a Federal Advisory Committee sponsored by the Department of the Interior under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, provides advice and recommendations related to management of Federal and national geospatial

programs, the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, and the implementation of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-16. The meeting is being scheduled for June 26 at Main Interior. (5/4/2018)

In May, the USGS will publish an online Science Snippet about a trio of recently published papers that show how fish, macroinvertebrates, and algae are affected by chemical and physical stressors in streams. The studies are based on the 2013 Midwest Stream Quality Assessment, which focused on 11 Midwestern states, and show that there are no pristine streams in the region. Chemical stressors, primarily nutrients and pesticides, and physical stressors, primarily excessive fine sediment and a disturbed riparian zone, have altered small streams and affected the number and diversity of fish, algae, and macroinvertebrates that call these streams home. (3/12/2018)

In May, the USGS will release a Scientific Investigation Report co-authored with the Bureau of Reclamation that compares and contrasts the two agencies' water-use information programs in the Colorado River Basin. The report also describes the legal drivers for each program, clarifies confusing terminology, compares the methods used, and contrasts the information reported by each agency. This detailed comparison shows how the different missions, programmatic drivers, and user communities of USGS and Reclamation lead to different approaches to water-use data collection, analysis, and reporting. Despite the differences, the program comparison presented in this report identifies opportunities for closer coordination and sharing of information between the two bureaus, as well as program components where inter-bureau collaboration can improve water-use estimate methodologies. (3/6/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

ASWS Travel: AS/WS Tim Petty is likely to travel to the Columbia River Basin during the week of June 25-29, to participate in Columbia River Treaty discussions and potential site visits.

### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

In early June, The Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region, Yuma Area Office (YAO) intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to request proposals to fund projects for activities in support of its Endangered Species and Environmental Restoration programs in Federal FY 2018 (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018). The YAO periodically makes funding available for conducting activities for Threatened and Endangered species and their habitats under Section 7(a)1 of the Endangered Species Act under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Program (FWCAP). Reclamation has made \$110,000.00 of funding available for award for this FWCAP Financial Assistance FOA. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that FY 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Reclamation will limit total funding to generally not more than \$50,000 in Federal funding to each applicant. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Eligible applicants are state and local governments, non-profit organizations and institutions, public and private institutions and organizations, federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments, individuals, small businesses, for-profit organizations, and Native American organizations. (4/9/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement on the New Mexico Unit Project. The proposed project is part of the Central Arizona Project, authorized by the Colorado River Basin Project Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90-537, 43 U.S.C. Ch. 32, as amended by the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA, Pub. L. 108-451). Pursuant to the AWSA, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to contract with water users in New Mexico for water from the Gila River, its tributaries and underground water sources. Use of Gila River water under the AWSA is conditioned on satisfying various laws and agreements related to the use and exchange of Gila River water in New Mexico and Arizona. The NM Unit will divert Gila River water in New Mexico for this purpose. The AWSA provided funding to construct the NM Unit or, to develop other alternatives in southwestern New Mexico to meet demand. Reclamation and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission are joint lead agencies for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other related environmental regulations regarding the proposed Project. Issuance of the NOI will initiate the formal public scoping process associated with NEPA compliance. (3/27/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the *Federal Register* (FR), to be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. The FR notice requests public comments on the Department's proposed decision to re-allocate Central Arizona Project non-Indian agricultural (CAP NIA) priority water consistent with a recommendation made to the Secretary by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) in January 2014. This process is in accordance with Section 104 of the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act (Public Law 108-451), which directed the Secretary to allocate to the ADWR up to 96,295 acre-feet of CAP NIA priority water; this water is to be held by ADWR under contract in trust for further allocation, until a reallocation recommendation is submitted by ADWR to the Secretary. In 2012, ADWR began the reallocation recommendation process, and on January 16, 2014, ADWR submitted its recommendation to the Secretary. As explained in the proposed FR notice, the Secretary proposes to make 46,629 acre-feet of the NIA Priority CAP water available under long-term contracts in the amounts and to the municipal and industrial entities identified in ADWR's recommendation. Reallocation of CAP NIA priority water would address the imbalance of water supply and demand in central Arizona by providing renewable water supplies to those entities with a projected demand/supply imbalance based on ADWR's evaluation criteria. The process for publishing the FR Notice of Intent will follow the National Environmental Policy Act clearance process outlined in the Deputy Secretary's April 27, 2018 memorandum. (4/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In June, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the Federal Register to begin charging fees at Lake Berryessa in Napa County, California. The fees will be used to upgrade facilities and pay for costs associated with recreation. Reclamation will ensure visitors are aware of the proposed plan by holding public scoping meetings, issuing press releases, posting it on the Lake Berryessa website at [www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html), and posting announcements at day-use areas. During public scoping meetings and the public comment period, Reclamation will seek input from the public regarding the possible use of funds collected. Public scoping meetings and public outreach will ensure the public is aware of all proposed fees and passes available to them. (2/26/2018)

In late June, Reclamation, Klamath Irrigation District, R&G Excavating, Klamath County, and the Klamath Basin irrigation community (Oregon) will hold an event to celebrate the completion of the new C Siphon which will convey irrigation water across the Lost River slough and Wildcat Canyon. The event will celebrate the success of the two-year construction project and a decades-long effort from procuring funding to construction. Media interest is expected. (4/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On or about June 15, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office plans to publish a Notice in the *Federal Register* entitled: Notice of Intent to Accept Proposals, Select Lessee, and Contract for Hydroelectric Power Development at Silver Jack Dam, Bostwick Park Project, Colorado. This Notice will present background information, proposal content guidelines, and information concerning selection of a non-Federal entity to develop hydroelectric power at Silver Jack Dam, and power purchasing and/or marketing considerations. Silver Jack Dam is a Federal Reclamation project located in Colorado. Reclamation is seeking proposals to lease the right to develop hydroelectric power at Silver Jack Dam outside of Montrose, Colorado, under a Lease of Power Privilege. The potential lessee must submit proposals on or before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 19, 2018, consistent with the guidelines included in the *Federal Register Notice*. (5/7/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

On May 20, the USGS will announce a new Scientific Investigation Report that provides inundation maps and flood details following Hurricane Harvey for areas of eastern and coastal Texas. Hurricane Harvey was the most significant rainfall event in US history, according to an upcoming USGS report. High water mark data, along with flood flow information from USGS streamgages, were used to create 19 inundation maps documenting the areal extent and depth of the flooding. In the immediate aftermath of Harvey, the USGS and FEMA initiated a cooperative study to evaluate the magnitude of flooding, determine the probability of occurrence and map the extent of the flood in Texas. USGS field crews collected 2,123 high-water marks in across southeast Texas. A news release is planned for Texas and the report will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. (4/26/2018)

On May 21, the USGS will be publishing a required Congressional report that summarizes USGS progress towards a national assessment of water availability and use. This National Water Census report, authorized by the SECURE Water Act (P.L. 111-11, Section 9508 (d)) (42 USC 10368), is the second in a series of reports to Congress that explains how the Water Census has progressed towards goals from 2013 to 2017. This is a congressionally mandated report that describes critical work the USGS has completed to understand, assess, and deliver information about water availability, as well as the collaboration and coordination with other agencies and organizations that are essential to the success of the National Water Census. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 21 the USGS and FWS will participate in an Asian Carp Congressional Briefing in Washington DC hosted by the Northeast Midwest Institute coinciding with the release of the 2018 Asian Carp Action Plan. The briefing will be led by the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee and focus on actions being taken in 2018 to prevent the introduction and establishment of Asian carp in the Great Lakes. The USGS will highlight the use of underwater

sound for deterring Asian carp, grass carp monitoring and risk assessment, research on mass removal of Asian carp, providing Asian carp life history data to inform population modeling and tools for decision makers, and provide an update on control tools currently being developed or field tested. Other agencies presenting include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The Asian Carp Action Plan is funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and agency appropriations. (5/8/2018)

On May 22-23 USGS and USDA will convene a National Imagery Summit on behalf of the Federal Geographic Data Committee at the USGS HQ in Reston, VA. Invitations are being extended to over three-hundred Government-only attendees, composed of White House, remote sensing policy, and civil agency leaders who oversee U.S. land imaging operations. The event will be webcast to US government GIS and land management scientists and practitioners across the United States. The purpose of the Summit is to address emerging challenges in today's dynamic imagery marketplace, with a focus on shortcomings and conflicts in U.S. policies related to overhead data collection, data management, and the variety of roles served by U.S. Federal and State agencies in meeting public needs for remotely sensed data and applications. Attendees will discuss current and future national land imaging needs, the status of current national capabilities, and national collection and data management strategies. (4/24/2018)

[**UPDATE**] On May 28, the USGS will announce a new paper about a study that evaluates land and surface water changes in Alaska. USGS scientists and partners combined Landsat imagery and climate reanalysis data to characterize land and water surface changes and identify underlying drivers of change throughout Alaska from 1984 to 2015. They identify the percent of Alaska's lands that changed during the last three decades, the ecoregion most affected, and the agent most responsible for the change. The study discusses how increased air temperatures affect vegetation growth and health and water availability. This research fills a critical gap in understanding historical and potential future trajectories of change not only in Alaska, but in other northern high latitude regions. The paper is expected to be published in *Global Change Biology*. A national news release accompanied by social media is planned (4/20/2018)

In mid-May, the USGS will highlight research on fish passage to assist migratory fish transit past man-made barriers and reach upstream spawning grounds. USGS fish passage research provides critical information needed for specialists to design and build effective fish passages that enable key species to get past dams, navigate waterways and complete migration cycles. These specially designed structures enable fish to bypass blocked waterways, giving migratory fish access to key spawning areas, nurseries and other crucial habitats. A USGS Feature Story is planned. (4/26/2018)

In May, the USGS will highlight a new USGS Circular entitled "A snapshot of women of the U.S. Geological Survey in STEM and related careers." Women's participation rate in the sciences is still lower than men's and relatively few women reach top scientific leadership roles. The USGS needs specialists from a growing variety of science and related fields to remain a science leader. Given that girls and women are underrepresented, it is logical to look to them to fulfill society's growing need and demand for science. With the online release of this circular, USGS will embark on a long-term campaign to encourage and inspire students, particularly girls

and young women from middle school through early career, to consider STEM careers, and to reach experienced female professionals for science and leadership positions in USGS. This will include an internal USGS and DOI communications component to honor, inspire, and celebrate women within the USGS. The circular will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. Printed copies will be available in June. A social media campaign is planned. (4/26/2018)

In May, the USGS will release a new Circular entitled “Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2015.” This report documents the national compilation of water use data issued by the USGS once every 5 years for the entire U.S. The report will present state-level water use data for the year 2015 and discuss long-term trends in water use. An accompanying data release of county-level data will be made available concurrently with the Circular. Also, a data visualization for the Circular and county-level data is being created. All three products will be released concurrently, and a news release is planned. (3/14/2018)

On May 31, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee will hold a field hearing to review the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program. USGS has been invited to testify at the hearing, which is scheduled to take place at the Huntington Beach Council Chambers (California). Steve McCabe, NEHRP director at NIST, and possibly Frank Vernon from Scripps/UCSD are also scheduled to testify. (4/26/2018)

In May, USGS will highlight research that examined differential changes in the onset of spring across U.S. National Wildlife Refuges and North American migratory bird flyways. The study used indices of spring onset, the First Leaf Index and the First Bloom Index, as proxies of habitat change for the period 1901 to 2012 at three spatial scales: the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System; the four major bird migratory flyways in North America; and the seasonal ranges (i.e., breeding and non-breeding grounds) of two migratory bird species, Bluewinged Warbler and Whooping Crane. The results provide insight into how differential shifts in the phenology of disparate but linked habitats could inform local- to landscape-scale management strategies for the conservation of migratory bird populations. A Top Story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

In mid-May, a workshop is planned to be held in Bozeman to support the Custer-Gallatin National Forest's Forest Plan Revision. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for May 16 and 17 and is being supported by scientists of the North Central Climate Adaptation Science Center. Involved partners and stakeholders include the U.S. Forest Service, Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee, Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative, The Wilderness Society, Minnesota State University, and the National Park Service. (5/1/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 1, the House Natural Resources Committee is planning to hold a field hearing in Grand Junction, Colorado at Colorado Mesa University (2:00 p.m.). This hearing will focus on opportunities to export natural gas from the Piceance Basin and the Jordan Cove LNG Terminal project. The hearing will also discuss oil shale opportunities in the U.S. and the need for further research on unconventional resources. USGS Energy Resources Program Coordinator Walter Guidroz will testify on recoverable resources in the Piceance Basin in Western Colorado, with other witnesses likely from the Western Slope Oil and Gas Association, the Colorado School of



Mines, and the National Oil Shale Association. Anticipated Members in attendance will include Chairman Bishop, Rep. Tipton (who will chair the hearing) and Rep. Lamborn. (5/3/2018)

[**NEW**] The week of June 4, USGS will participate in the Association of American State Geologists' annual meeting in Rehoboth, Del., including a breakout session with an emphasis on critical minerals. ASWS Tim Petty is also scheduled to participate at the meeting. (5/8/2018)

[**UPDATE**] On June 15, the USGS will announce a new report that evaluates the condition of resources in Olympic National Park. The 400-page Natural Resource Condition Assessment, or NRCA, addresses the current status and trends of 12 resources that Olympic National Park managers identified as species or communities of concern. The report was produced in cooperation with the National Park Service and a local news release is planned. (4/17/2018)

In June, the USGS will be highlighting remote sensing efforts underway. The first part will focus on a new research effort to survey water resources in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain from the air. Beginning in late February, the USGS began the first in a series of flights in Greenwood, Mississippi, to acquire large-scale airborne geophysical data in support of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain (MAP) Regional Water Availability Study, part of a groundwater availability study in the region. The USGS is working in partnership with multiple state agencies. The second is a UAS project in Colorado where the USGS will be testing a variety of noncontact sensors mounted on small, unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) to measure river metrics including velocity, top width, area, and discharge and compare these data to ground-based conventional stream-gauging methods. A top story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

## **Awareness**

### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

On March 21, Reclamation's Provo Area Office was notified by a Utah State Parks Manager at Red Fleet Reservoir that a 14-year-old boy had been apprehended after he had been observed throwing rocks containing dinosaur footprint impressions into the reservoir. Reclamation is considering whether to recommend prosecutorial action and assessing ways to protect the impressions in the future. (04/30/2018)

Reclamation's Dakotas Area Office is preparing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Reclamation and the Province of Manitoba regarding the development of the Adaptive Management Plan for the Northwest Area Water Supply Biota Water Treatment Plant, located in North Dakota. The draft MOU was provided to the Province of Manitoba. Manitoba has provided initial comments back to Reclamation. These comments are currently being reviewed by the Solicitor's Office. (3/27/2018)

Following coordination with his counterpart Assistant Secretaries, AS/WS Tim Petty provided a Decision Memorandum for the Secretary's consideration setting forth the Department's position on the priority of the key drivers for the upcoming Columbia River Treaty negotiations. The Department will actively participate in Columbia River Treaty negotiations/activities through the engagement of Assistant Secretary Petty, and staffed by Reclamation, with the treaty's two

technical entities, Bonneville Power Administration and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Department supports the two key drivers being flood control and hydropower generation. (4/2/2018)

The April 2018 24-Month Study establishes that Lake Powell operations will shift to “balancing releases” for the remainder of water year 2018. Under balancing, the contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead will be balanced by the end of the water year, but not more than 9.0 million acre-feet and not less than 8.23 maf shall be released from Lake Powell. Based on the most probable inflow forecast, this April 24-Month Study projects a balancing release of 9.0 maf in water year 2018; the actual release in water year 2018, however, will depend on hydrology in the remainder of water year and will range from 8.23 to 9.0 maf. The projected release from Lake Powell in water year 2018 will be updated each month throughout the remainder of the water year. Based on the current inflow forecast and projected releases, the April 24-Month Study projects Lake Powell elevation will end water year 2018 near 3,598 feet, with approximately 11.6 maf in storage (48 percent of capacity). Currently, Lake Powell is 53 percent full, with a live storage content of 12.8 maf. (4/16/2018)

[UPDATE] In conjunction with the Administration's legislation transmitted to Congress to facilitate the transfer of title of Bureau of Reclamation's projects and facilities to non-Federal entities, the Department and Reclamation are working with the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) on development of a categorical exclusion (CE) under the National Environmental Policy Act for select types of title transfers. The CE would be established for those situations where the proposed transfer of title from Reclamation to a willing entity is non-controversial, non-complicated and would not result in a change in the operations or management of the facilities. Establishment of a categorical exclusion could decrease the time required for Reclamation to complete title transfers. Pursuant to CEQ Regulations, Reclamation and CEQ are currently working together on a notice for the Federal Register proposing that a CE be established for this purpose. The expected target for publication of this notice in the Federal Register is mid-July. (3/20/2018)

On April 12, the Glen Canyon Dam Experimental Technical Team met with the Experimental Leadership Team and the Department of the Interior to recommend that Macroinvertebrate Production Flows, also known as “Bug Flows,” be tested between May 1 and August 31, 2018. The Assistant Secretary for Water and Science approved the Bug Flows via a signed memorandum dated April 13, 2018. Bug Flows consist of steady weekend releases from Glen Canyon Dam (located along the Colorado River near the Arizona/Utah state line) and normal fluctuating releases during the weekdays. The steady weekend flows are expected to provide favorable conditions for insects to lay eggs along the Colorado River downstream of Glen Canyon Dam, while the fluctuating flows during the weekdays are designed to be slightly higher, thus preventing the eggs from drying out. This experiment is expected to have positive benefits to the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in Glen, Marble, and Grand canyons. The purpose of the experimental flow is to test the effectiveness of Bug Flows on improving insect production and to increase the availability of food for aquatic and terrestrial life. This experiment will be conducted under the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan. On April 30, a press release will be issued. (3/26/2018)

***U.S. Geological Survey***

[**NEW**] USGS scientists at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory continue to monitor the ongoing eruption at Kīlauea Volcano. Scientists are closely monitoring activity at two sites. Geologists are maintaining round-the-clock surveillance along the Lower East Rift Zone where fissures continue to appear in and around the Leilani Estates subdivision. Fourteen fissures have opened so far, resulting in elevated volcanic gas emissions and small lava flows. The area has been evacuated and Hawaii County Civil Defense is keeping residents informed about closures, warnings, and safety messages. The second location is at the summit of Kīlauea (in the National Park) where the lava lake level continues to drop. This raises the strong possibility of explosions caused by the interaction of groundwater and hot rock. In response, the USGS released an assessment of the hazard to the summit area posed by the possible steam explosions. Rockfalls from the steep crater walls into the retreating lake continue to produce occasional ashy plumes above Halema'uma'u crater. These plumes are expected to continue. Earthquake activity in the summit remains elevated. Many of these earthquakes are related to the ongoing subsidence of the summit area. (5/9/2018)

[**NEW**] USGS scientists have begun a new study to map and model the distribution and habitat associations of lizard and snakes in sagebrush ecosystems. They will examine their response to changes in habitat resulting from greater sage-grouse restoration, shifts in vegetation as a result of fire and invasive annual grasses, and regional changes in temperature and precipitation. Finally, researchers will map priority areas for conservation of lizards and snakes in sagebrush ecosystems, identifying relative importance of public and private lands. This work will provide baseline information about habitat needs and identify priority areas for conservation for lizards and snakes in sagebrush ecosystems. The study is a collaboration with USFS and was requested and funded by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. (5/8/2018)

On May 9, USGS will participate in the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine's Committee on Earth Resources' one-day workshop titled "Critical Minerals and Materials: Opportunities, challenges, and needs for U.S. manufacturing, economy, and security." (5/2/2018)

On May 12, the USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory (Vancouver, Wash.) will hold a one-day public open house. USGS scientists will take a break from their day-to-day work to set up volcano displays and prepare science demonstrations to share with the public. The event is free and all ages are welcome. A local media advisory will be distributed. (3/27/2018)

On May 16 and 17, USGS scientists will meet with the Nez Perce Tribal Council to discuss ongoing research to investigate mercury cycling and bioaccumulation on a section of the Snake River referred to as Hells Canyon. The USGS, in collaboration with Idaho Power Company and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, started the investigation in 2014 to evaluate processes controlling mercury transport, cycling, and bioaccumulation in Hells Canyon. The work is a collaborative effort with scientists from the USGS Wisconsin Water Science Center, USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, USGS Idaho Water Science Center, and the USGS Water Mission Area. (4/25/18)

[**NEW**] On May 21-24 USGS scientists will present genetic and disease research on bighorn sheep in Dinosaur National Monument (WY), Yellowstone National Park (WY, MT, ID), and Glacier National Park (MT and Canada) at the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council in Whitefish (MT). Bighorn sheep are an important species in our national parks and monuments, an important game species, and an important part of food webs. Research in Dinosaur National Monument is an assessment of habitat, movement, disease, and population structure that informs federal and state managers on the success of previous introductions and considerations for future monitoring and management. Research on Glacier National Park bighorns assessed effects of population size and habitat quality on social contacts and disease. Information on whether and how the bighorns in Glacier, Waterton Lakes National Park, and the Blackfeet Reservation are subdivided provides options for management in a disease event or to proactively reduce the likelihood of disease. This is especially important as a fire in 2015 may bring together two subpopulations that were previously semi-isolated (and thus buffered from disease). Research on genomic data from Glacier, Yellowstone National Park and other Western state populations will provide guidelines to management for sample sizes needed to describe the genetic health of their populations. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] On June 2, the USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center (NOROCK) in Bozeman, Mont. will host an Open House from 10am - 3pm. The local community is invited to to learn more about the exciting science NOROCK does on bears, elk, glaciers, avalanches, tree rings, bats, American pikas, native fish, invasive species, wildlife disease, sagebrush habitats, Montana's water resources, Yellowstone geology and much more, including cool technology to study wildlife such as radars and drones. This family-friendly event is free to the public and includes several engaging and interactive exhibits and demonstrations. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In a new study, researchers will map and model the distribution and habitat associations of lizard and snakes in sagebrush ecosystems. Little is known about how lizards and snakes may respond to changes in habitat from climate, invasive species, fire, roads, and natural resource management. In particular, there is a need to identify how greater sage-grouse habitat management, including alteration of sagebrush shrublands and pinyon-juniper woodlands, may influence these animals. In a new study, researchers will map and model the distribution and habitat associations of lizard and snakes in sagebrush ecosystems. They will examine their response to changes in habitat resulting from greater sage-grouse restoration, shifts in vegetation as a result of fire and invasive annual grasses, and regional changes in temperature and precipitation. Finally, researchers will map priority areas for conservation of lizards and snakes in sagebrush ecosystems, identifying relative importance of public and private lands. This work will provide baseline information about habitat needs and identify priority areas for conservation for lizards and snakes in sagebrush ecosystems. Partners include the U.S. Forest Service and the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In a new study, USGS will evaluate a novel biopesticide for controlling exotic annual grasses following rangeland wildfire. Scientists will test a novel weed-suppressive bacteria (WSB) combined with the herbicide imazapic on target weeds and non-target native plants on over 1000 acres in the Boise River Wildlife Management Area. Invasions by exotic annual grasses, most notably cheatgrass and medusahead, are unambiguous threats to rangelands in the western United States, diminishing livestock productivity and increasing wildfire activity. The

objective is to determine if, when, and where spraying is effective for controlling exotic annual grasses. They will also model how landscape factors influence treatment effectiveness. This study is requested and funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. (5/8/2018)

In a new USGS Powell Center project, scientists from the USGS, Columbia University, and the EPA will lead an international working group to synthesize information on terrestrial nitrogen fixation worldwide. Biological nitrogen fixation is the largest source of the essential nutrient nitrogen that feeds terrestrial ecosystems worldwide. As a result, biological nitrogen fixation has far reaching effects on ecosystem properties such as water quality and carbon storage, sustainability for plant growth and soil fertility, and the global climate system. However, there is much uncertainty in how local measurements should be upscaled for large-scale assessments and Earth systems modeling. Researchers will synthesize nitrogen fixation data for many different species, including free-living bacteria, symbiotic plants, mosses, lichens, and others. New methods will create maps of nitrogen fixation across the United States and North America, and analyses of environmental drivers will improve future predictions of biological nitrogen fixation in response to regional and global environmental change. (05/02/18)

This spring, USGS scientists will begin collecting bird data on grasslands in Montana. A local news release is planned for the communities of Malta and Glasgow to alert residents in the area that scientists will be conducting field work on public lands. (4/26/2018)

The Department of Justice has solicited the USGS for Bob Holmes (or someone with equivalent knowledge and experience) to be the expert hydraulics witness in the second phase of the Ideker Farms Missouri River litigation. The work effort would be approximately 6 months of calendar time. It is expected that Bob will be selected, but this is not yet final. Plans are being made to backfill Holmes flood coordination duties. (4/30/2018)

Executive Order 13817/Secretarial Order 3359 milestones: On April 19, 2018, the USGS delivered to the Secretary a draft plan to better assess the Nation's subsurface mineral potential through new collection of geophysical, geologic, and topographic data. Beginning in May, the USGS anticipates additional review and input from other Federal agencies and external partners, and ongoing revisions as required to inform the government-wide strategy to be published by the Department of Commerce in August 2018. Coordination with white house staff continues on next steps following the assessment of the public comments received on the draft critical mineral list. Another Federal Register Notice has been suggested as an option. Next steps in support of the Executive Order include USGS technical input to interagency drafting teams on: (1) the potential to better use above-ground sources of critical minerals through recycling, reprocessing, and substituting alternative materials; (2) existing foreign trade dependencies for critical minerals. (2/9/2018)

In late June, a delegation of 180 officials from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are invited to meet at the University of Oklahoma, the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) host university, during the 2018 Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council Ministerial. The South Central CASC is planning to highlight their science work during the officials' visit and will be part of the University of Oklahoma's discussions for future plans to

collaborate with these officials and stakeholders. The CEC Council Chairmanship and Ministerial rotates between the US, Mexico, and Canada each year, and Administrator Scott Pruitt (current chair) selected Oklahoma City as the location for the 2018 meeting. The theme for this year's Council Ministerial is "Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth". (4/24/2018)

The USGS, through the Department of the Interior's Technical Assistance Program and the State Department, has been invited to participate in a scoping assessment of Romanian oil and gas concessions, data management and environmental risk mitigation. The assessment, which will take place in June, will be led by State's Energy Resources Bureau and will include site visits to Bucharest and Constanta. This initial assessment might lead to further energy governance and capacity building in the region later this year. (5/2/2018)

The USGS continues progress toward implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) for the energy geochemistry laboratories. External audits are complete and USGS is taking corrective actions to address audit results and preparing a formal report to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) that certifies that a functional QMS is fully implemented. The target date to complete the package internally is May 18, after which results will be reviewed with USGS management and submitted to DOI for further review. Any changes will be reviewed again, with final submission to the OIG scheduled for late June. (5/2/2018)

This summer, a manuscript on a new USGS assessment of undiscovered conventional oil and gas resources in down-dip Paleogene formations of the U.S. Gulf Coast will be published in the Gulf Coast Association of Geologic Societies Bulletin. In 2007, based on only sparse data, the USGS estimated with large uncertainty over 50 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered gas. Recent discoveries offshore and data from wells onshore provided new evidence of a working petroleum system in these formations. Subsequently, eight assessment units (AUs) for conventional resources and three AUs for continuous (unconventional) resources were identified. (5/2/2018)

The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NAS) has nearly completed a strategic review of the USGS Energy Resources Program. The study is to evaluate the long term strategic priorities of the program and suggest alternatives or changes for the program to consider. A committee was assembled by the NAS and has now met three times, twice with program participation and once in closed session. A rough draft of the report is due in early July, with a final report due by August. (5/2/2018)

Beginning August 6, the USGS will conduct the Mid-Atlantic Resource Imaging Experiment (MATRIX) seismic project on Atlantic margin in partnership with BOEM and the U.S. Department of Energy. The goal of the project is to image distribution of gas hydrate and shallow gas on Atlantic margin between Hudson Canyon and Cape Hatteras across areas considered highly prospective for gas hydrates. Seismic data will be collected over a period of 2.5 to 3 weeks. An Incidental Harassment Authorization Application was submitted to NMFS in March, and initial comments have been received. The Draft Environmental Assessment and request for Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act was also submitted to NMFS in March. The draft EA is posted on the USGS Coastal/Marine Hazards & Resources Program's environmental compliance website and is open for public comment until April 19. (4/6/2018)

Secretarial Order 3352 milestones: The reprocessing of vintage 2-D seismic data acquired in the mid-1980s over the Section 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is progressing, with expected delivery in the summer of 2018. A resource assessment of the Section 1002 area will be deferred pending the acquisition of 3-D seismic data by industry. In the interim, the USGS will shift its efforts on resource assessments on Alaska's North Slope to accelerate the evaluation of the Central North Slope (CNS) lands situated between ANWR and the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The expected completion date of the CNS assessment is December 2019; an assessment covering NPR-A was released in December 2017. Field work to support the broader North Slope effort is scheduled for this summer, with logistical planning now underway. (5/2/2018)

### **Upcoming USGS Publications**

[**NEW**] A recently published USGS Open-File Report entitled "Supporting natural resource management—The role of economics at the Department of the Interior—A workshop report" is now available online from the USGS Publications Warehouse. Prepared in cooperation with the DOI Office of Policy Analysis, the report shares results from the first-ever DOI Economics Workshop. This workshop, held in early April 2018, brought more than 80 economists from across DOI and resulted in a set of actionable findings and recommendations for advancing the use of economics within DOI. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In May a new USGS Open-File Report entitled "Assessment of Undiscovered Oil and Gas Resources in the Midlands Area, England, 2018" will be available online from the USGS Publications Warehouse. Using a geology-based assessment methodology, the USGS estimated mean undiscovered, technically recoverable resources of oil and gas in the Midlands Area of England.

[**NEW**] In May a new USGS Scientific Investigation Report entitled "Groundwater Availability of the Williston Basin, United States and Canada" will be available online from the USGS Publications Warehouse. In 2011, the USGS began a project to understand the availability of groundwater in the Williston Basin, and as part of the project, a numerical simulation model was developed with which different scenarios of groundwater extraction and recharge could be entered in order to estimate the effect on the entire groundwater system. The goals of this national assessment are to document effects of human activities on water levels and groundwater storage, to explore effects of climate variability on the regional water budget, and to provide consistent and integrated information that is useful to those who use and manage the groundwater resource. Accompanying USGS Professional Paper, Fact Sheet and Data Release for this project are also scheduled for this summer.

[**NEW**] In May a new paper entitled "Coastal wetland adaptation to sea level rise: quantifying potential for landward migration and coastal squeeze" is anticipated to be published in the journal *Global Ecology and Biogeography*. The research provides insights into the potential for coastal wetlands and estuaries to migrate and/or adapt in response to changing sea levels. The research quantifies and compares the area available for landward migration of tidal saline

wetlands, as well as the area where urban development is expected to limit migration for 39 estuaries along the wetland-rich northern Gulf of Mexico coast. (5/8/2018)

[*NEW*] In May a new USGS paper entitled “Longevity and population age structure of the arroyo southwestern toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*) with drought implications” will be published in the journal *Ecology and Evolution*. Arroyo toads are found only in the coastal plains and mountains of central and southern California and northwestern Baja California, Mexico, where they face threats such as invasive species, habitat loss, and changes to local water systems. To inform their management during future droughts, USGS and CDFW scientists set out to understand how long arroyo toads live in natural ecosystems, and whether population age structures varied across rivers and streams. Results indicated that arroyo toads may live seven to eight years in natural systems, and that populations in pools that occur predictably or stay consistently wet throughout the year tended to have higher numbers of young toads and more toads growing to adulthood or migrating in. In contrast, populations dwelling in temporary water bodies had greater numbers of older toads and fewer animals immigrating in or surviving to adulthood. These findings inform current understanding of how predicted droughts might affect this sensitive species. (5/8/2018)

[*NEW*] In late May or June, a new paper entitled, “Sensitivity of mangrove range limits to climate variability” is to be published in the journal *Global Ecology and Biogeography*. The research provides insights into the strength of climatic control of different mangrove range limits. Results suggest that range limits in eastern North America are strongly controlled by climate variability and that rapid expansion of mangroves can be expected in regions that are highly sensitive to climate extremes (e.g., North America), while response in other range limits (e.g. South America) is likely to be more complex and modulated by other factors such as dispersal limitation, habitat constraints, and/or changing average climate conditions. (5/8/2018)

[*NEW*] In late May or early June, a new paper entitled “Influence of climate on alpine stream chemistry and water sources” is anticipated to be published in the journal *Hydrological Processes*. The paper describes estimations of snow, rain, groundwater, and soil-water contributions to an alpine stream for a high-elevation mountain watershed over a 22-year period to assess the influence of climate on the water cycle. Interannual patterns of water source contributions were found to be strongly influenced by drought and wet periods. Findings highlight the role of subsurface water (groundwater and soil water) in providing hydrologic resilience to alpine watersheds and the usefulness of regional-scale climate indices in forecasting hydrologic behavior. (5/8/2018)

[*NEW*] In late May or June a new article entitled, “Snowpack scenarios for Alaska under climate change” is anticipated to be published in a special issue of the journal *Water*. This journal article describes snowpack scenarios for Alaska under climate change, using statistical downscaling scenarios constructed for Alaska, building off of snow-day fraction scenarios for Alaska (by McAfee et al 2014) and the Chugach National Forest Vulnerability Assessment. (5/8/2018)

[*NEW*] In mid May, an Aleutian Bering Sea Islands Vulnerability Assessment is anticipated to be published by the Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) via online publication. An Alaska Climate Adaptation Science Center scientist



contributed to the LCC publication, which is intended to serve as a multi-sectoral vulnerability assessment of resources and systems in the Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands region done between 2014 and 2016. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] This summer, a new paper entitled “Diurnal patterns of methane flux from a seasonal wetland: mechanisms and methodology” is anticipated to be published in the journal *Wetlands*. The paper describes development of new technology developed to answer questions about methane flux from wetlands. The gas flux sampling system, allowed researchers to acquire over 200 days of daily data in a one-of-a-kind dataset that provided new insight into abiotic and biotic mechanisms controlling methane flux. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In May a new USGS paper entitled “Extinction risk and recovery options for an endangered Hawaiian Honeycreeper” will be published in the *Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management*. This paper, led by the University of Hawaii, presents and analyzes a new population model for the critically endangered Maui parrotbill or kiwikiu (*Pseudonestor xanthophrys*), a critically endangered species of Hawaiian honeycreeper that can be found only in a 50 square kilometre area on the windward slopes of Haleakalā on Maui Hawaii. Researchers use the model to assess management and recovery probabilities for long term viability of this species. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In May or June a new USGS Open-File Report entitled “A comparison of photograph-interpreted and IfSAR-derived maps of polar bear den habitat for the 1002 Area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska” will be available online from the USGS Publications Warehouse. The report describes a qualitative analysis to compare maps of possible polar bear den habitats on the Arctic Coastal Plain of the Refuge. Historically, most polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) from the Southern Beaufort Sea subpopulation constructed maternity dens on the sea ice. However, over the last three decades, there has been a shift in the distribution of dens, with most now occurring on land. The qualitative comparison of IfSAR- and photograph-derived maps indicated that differences exist in the ability of the two methods to identify the same maternal denning habitat in the Refuge. Previous work and this report suggests that IfSAR data have limitations that may be surmounted with DTMs whose pixel size is reduced to that of the average footprint of a typical polar bear maternal den. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management may use the report and data to inform permitting and planning. This work was requested by the DOI Senior Advisor for Alaskan Affairs and a briefing paper was sent on May 2, 2018. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In the coming months a new USGS co-authored paper entitled “Assessing breeding season habitat vulnerability for a salt marsh-dependent species with sea-level rise” will be published in the journal *Wetlands*. USGS and their partners forecast salt marsh and sensitive wildlife vulnerability to predicted rates of sea level rise (SLR) along the Pacific coast. The Federally endangered light-footed Ridgway’s rail (*Rallus obsoletus levipes*) and California Ridgway’s rail (*Rallus obsoletus obsoletus*) depend on salt marshes and may be especially vulnerable in isolated, fragmented, and urbanized wetlands. The results can inform management of salt-marsh dependent species like the light-footed and California Ridgway’s rails. Partners and stakeholders include FWS, UCLA, Audubon California, Olofson Environmental, Inc., Orange County Water District, Point Blue Conservation Science. (05/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In the coming months a new USGS paper entitled “Belding’s savannah sparrow and sea-level rise” will be published in the journal *Ecology and Evolution*. USGS scientists and research partners used habitat suitability models, elevation, and observational data to forecast the impact of rising seas on the state-listed Belding’s savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi*). This species lives in high-elevation salt marsh within the Southern California Bight, where the severity of changes from sea level rise could depend on coastal topology, accretion, and constraints from surrounding development. Study results suggest that suitable breeding and foraging habitat could decline as increased inundation converts middle and high elevation suitable habitat to mudflat and subtidal zones. As a result, the highest sea level rise scenario predicted that no suitable breeding or foraging habitat would remain at any site by 2100 and 2110. Findings provide resource and land managers with timely science to inform management of the Belding’s savannah sparrow in southern California. Partners include UCLA, UCSB, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Suisun Resource Conservation District, Suisun City, University of Illinois, Avian Research Associates, Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In the coming months, an accepted paper co-authored by USGS entitled “Insight into infectious hematopoietic necrosis virus (IHNV) in Chinese rainbow trout aquaculture from virus isolated from 7 provinces in 2010 - 2014” will be published in the journal *Aquaculture*. This is the first comprehensive epidemiological analysis of an important aquaculture pathogen within the People’s Republic of China, relative to possible global incidence. The aquatic rhabdovirus infectious hematopoietic necrosis virus (IHNV) currently causes substantial fish losses in Chinese cold water aquaculture. While IHNV was first reported in China in 1985 and has since undergone considerable spread, little is known about the underlying epidemiological patterns like introduction sources and transmission routes. In this study, researchers examined epidemiological and phylogenetic data for 50 IHNV isolates from 7 provinces in China detected in 2010-2014. Partners and stakeholders include Shenzhen Academy of Inspection and Quarantine Sciences, Shenzhen, People's Republic of China (5/8/2018)

[**NEW**] In the next 30-90 days a new USGS paper entitled “The influence of chick production on territory retention in Arctic-breeding Pacific and Yellow-billed loons” will be published in the journal *Ibis*. The study evaluates the role of breeding success and competition on territory retention by two loon species (Pacific and Yellow-billed Loons) in the National Petroleum Reserve – Alaska (NPR-A). The results found that territory retention and apparent survival rates for both loon species are high, and that chick production does not impact loon territory retention. This information may be useful for guiding future oil and gas development near Yellow-billed Loon nesting areas. This work is part of the U.S. Geological Survey’s Changing Arctic Ecosystems Initiative and is supported by USGS and USFWS. (5/8/2018)

# Conversation Contents

## Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/7

### Attachments:

/60. Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/7/1.1 Speaking Calendar.xlsx  
/60. Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/7/1.2 Speaking Engagement Form.docx

**"Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed May 09 2018 17:25:21 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** "Newell, Russell" <russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/7  
**Attachments:** Speaking Calendar.xlsx Speaking Engagement Form.docx

Team,

Attached, please find the latest version of the speaking calendar, updated for the week of 5/7.

The Speaking Engagement Form is attached on here as well; if an upcoming speaking engagement of yours is not on the calendar, please have an assistant in your hallway fill out the form and send it to Russ Newell and me, with Laura Rigas CC'd.

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Sincerely,

Eli Nachmany  
Speechwriter, Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 706-9285

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)
5/9	Kathleen Benedetto	Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	BLM's Nevada Solid Minerals Training Conference	
5/9	David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Assn. of California Water Agencies	
5/9	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association	
5/11	Cally Younger	Acting Deputy Solicitor for Land Resources	Office of the Solicitor	National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference	
5/12	Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Alaska Safari Club Annual Spring Meeting	
5/14	Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Lake Nighthorse Opening	
5/16	Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	15th Annual Stewardship Partnership Meeting - Southern Company and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	
5/23	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Tribal/Interior Budget Council	
5/31	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	United Tribes of Michigan meeting	

Location	OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Winnemucca, NV		Closed	BLM employees	
Sacramento, CA		?	Elected board members, opinion leaders, general managers, legal counsel	
Washington, DC		?	Tribal Leaders of 16 Tribal Nations from South Dakota, North Dakota, and Nebraska.	
Louisville, KY		Open	Ecosystem banking and related markets	
Anchorage, AK		Closed	Safari Club International Alaska Chapter members	
Lake Nighthorse, CO		Open	General public	
Biloxi, MS		Closed		
Washington, DC		?	Federal and Tribal Members	
Petoskey, MI		?	Tribal	

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)	Location
10/16	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	American Recreation Coalition luncheon	Outdoor recreation	Washington, D.C.
10/16	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	National Congress of American Indians	Upholding trust	Milwaukee, WI
10/17	Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of Intergovernment and External Affairs	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	responsibilities	
10/17	Casey Hammond	DAS	Land and Minerals Management	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Secretary's Top 10 priorities	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Aurelia Skipwith	DAS	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Bureau of Land Management issues	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Mining Association	Conservation	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Austin Ewell	DAS	Water and Science	Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway completion ceremony	Secretary's priorities for hardrock mining and coal	Washington, D.C.
10/19	David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	National Congress of American Indians		Folsom, CA
10/19	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council	Sovereignty	Milwaukee, WI
10/20	Daniel Jorjani	Principal Deputy Solicitor	Office of the Solicitor	CA State Bar Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite	Upholding trust responsibilities	Polson, MT
10/21	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Alaska Federation Natives & Consultation	Regulatory reform	Fish Camp, CA
10/24	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exhibition Keynote Luncheon	Upholding trust responsibilities and Licensed Indian Traders regulations consultation	Anchorage, AK
10/24	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	NM Assn of Conservation Districts	Secure and reliable energy production from the Outer Continental Shelf	Lafayette, LA
10/26	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	DOI-Self Governance Advisory Quarterly Meeting	Public access, forest management, sage grouse	Taos, NM
10/27	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Chemical Association	Reorganization	Washington, D.C.
10/31	Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	ACT-IAC 2017 Executive Leadership Conference	Energy dominance	New Orleans, LA
11/1	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Native American Heritage Month Opening Ceremony	Management efficiency and effectiveness	Williamsburg, VA
						Washington, D.C.

11/1 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Organization of American States 2017		
11/2 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Conservation Champion Award	Award presentation	Washington, D.C.
11/3 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Women in Energy Infrastructure		Washington, D.C.
11/7 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference - DC	Land into trust, tribal courts	Washington, D.C.
11/8 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	NACA 2017-Federal Contracting Policy & Advocacy Conference	Economic development for Native communities	Washington, D.C.
11/8 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Deepwater Operations Conference		Galveston, TX
11/8 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Tribal/Interior Budget Council		Washington, D.C.
11/9 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Alaska Miners Association Convention	Federal policy regarding hard rock resources on federal land	Anchorage, AK
11/9 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Easton Waterfowl Festival Premiere Night	Introducing winner of the duck stamp competition	Easton, MD
11/9 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Heartland Institute America First Energy Conference	American Energy Dominance	Houston, TX
11/14 Andrea Travnicek	Acting Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	International Assn. of Drilling Contractors		Austin, TX
11/14 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	20th William T. Pecora Memorial Remote Sensing Symposium	Application of Earth Observing Data	Sioux Falls, SD
11/14 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Idaho Cattle Association		Sun Valley, ID
11/16 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Luncheon	Western issues	Washington, DC
11/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club Presentation		Grand Junction, CO
11/17 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	"Mvskoke Etlwv: The Muscogee People"	Meet and greet	Washington, DC
11/21 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	TBD: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Gas Infrastructure Exports Initiative	U.S. LNG	Washington, DC
11/28 Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	Commonwealth North Board of Directors meeting	DOI in Alaska	Anchorage, AK
11/28 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting	Invasive species management	Las Vegas, NV
11/29 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs Alaska Providers Conference		Anchorage, AK
11/30 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference		Hood River, OR
			Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls		Ottawa, Canada

11/30 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Environmental Law & Policy Conference	Endangered Species Act	Washington, DC
11/30 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
11/30 Austin Ewell	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
12/4 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Reducing barriers to mineral exploration and development	Sparks/Reno, NV
12/5 John Tahsuda	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	National Indian Gaming Association	Indian trader regulations and proposed land acquisition regulations	Washington, DC
12/6 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Offshore Operators Committee General Mtg		New Orleans, LA
12/6 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Platts Energy Conference		New York, NY
12/6 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Sage-grouse, regulatory reform	Reno, NV
12/6 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Civil Applications Committee, NCAC Reston	Volcanoes and landslide analysis	Reston, VA
12/7 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	State Policy Network		Washington, DC
12/7 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	ALEC: States & Nations Policy Summit	Energy dominance	Nashville, TN
12/7 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	American Exploration and Mining Association	Alaska's mining industry	Reno, NV
12/8 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/8 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/11 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Bayou Industrial Group and South Central Industrial Association	Offshore energy	Gray, LA
12/12 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular Affairs	Island Government Finance Officers (IGFOA) Conference		Maui, HI



12/15 Brenda Burman	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Colorado River Water Users Association Annual Conference		Las Vegas, NV
1/5 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Congressional Sports Foundation		Dallas, TX
1/6 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Dallas Safari Club		Dallas, TX
			Heritage Foundation Overcriminalization Working Group	MBTA M-Opinion	Washington, DC
1/10 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Solicitor	Archery Trade Association		Indianapolis, IN
1/11 Rick May	Senior National Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Sacramento, CA
1/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			
1/17 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Mid Pacific Region Water Users Conference	CA water issues	Reno, NV
1/17 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Federalist Society	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Washington, DC
1/18 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Prior Lake, MN
1/19 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Wild Sheep Foundation Convention		Reno, NV
			Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Panel		
1/19 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Texas Oil and Gas Assn. Legislative and Regulatory Planning Meeting	Federal regulation of oil and gas	Anchorage, AK
1/23 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement			New Orleans, LA
	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary				
1/24 Jason Larrabee		Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Ecological Restoration Business Association Meet and Greet with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	Infrastructure	Washington, DC
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Portland, OR
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention		Portland, OR
1/26 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation			Denver, CO
				Sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros	
1/29 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Society for Range Management		Sparks, NV
				Secretary's position on tribal relations	
1/31 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	DOI Alaska Native relations training		Anchorage, AK
2/1 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	2018 Power and Energy Ski Conference		Deer Valley, UT
			Federal Delegation Meeting - House Committee on Natural Resources		
2/2 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Close Up Foundation (USET)	Panel with students	Salt Lake City, UT
2/5 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)		Washington, DC
2/6 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			Washington, DC
				Streamline and improve the listing and ruling process of at-risk species	
2/6 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	Fish and Wildlife Service	Forest Landowners Association Board of Directors Meeting		Washington, DC

2/8 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Indian Gaming Conference	Fee-to-trust under the Trump administration Interior priorities and accomplishments	Valley Center, CA
2/8 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Texas Public Policy Foundation Western Caucus Foundation House Staff Policy		Austin, TX
2/9 Todd Willens 2/12 John Tahsuda	Assistant Deputy Secretary Acting Asst. Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary Indian Affairs	Planning Retreat State of Indian Nations		Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 Dan Smith	Acting Director	National Park Service	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Brian Steed	Deputy Director	Bureau of Land Management	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Cally Younger 2/13 John Tahsuda	Counselor Acting Asst. Secretary	Bureau of Land Management Indian Affairs	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails National Congress of American Indians 23rd Annual National Indian Women's	Protect the Great Lakes and Relationship to DOI Departmental Budget	Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	"Supporting Each Other Honoring Lunch"		Washington, DC
2/14 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Great Lakes Environmental Summit		Washington, DC
2/17 Aurelia Skipwith 2/19 Steve Wackowski	Deputy Asst. Secretary Senior Advisor for Alaska Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Office of the Secretary	Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Birthday Celebration Meet Alaska Conference and Tradeshow		Washington, DC Anchorage, AK
2/20 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Native American Child Safety Act (NACSA)		Phoenix, AZ
2/21 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Guidelines		Albuquerque, NM
2/22 Jason Funes	Special Assistant Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary		FreedomWorks		Oxon Hill, MD
2/22 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and Conference		Miami, FL
2/22 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation		Western water issues	Reno, NV

2/22 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	South Dakota Chamber of Commerce	Tourism through National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges	Pierre, SD
2/22 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Insular and International Affairs	Coral Reef Task Force		Washington, DC
2/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/1 Steve Wackowski	Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference		Anchorage, AK
3/1 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Indian Trust Asset Reform Act		Portland, OR
3/1 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/5 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement		Regulators roundtable: Oil and gas industry governance	
3/5 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	CERAWeek		Houston, TX
3/6 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	National Ground Water Association, Irrigation Association & Water Quality Association		Washington, DC
3/7 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	American Sheep Industry Association			Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Policy, Management & Budget	CXO Fellows Event (Chief Financial Officers Council)		Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Coal Council	What's next for Interior	Clearwater Beach, FL
3/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Caucus Foundation		
3/9 Ryan Nichols	Advisor	Water and Science		Proctor Creek Urban Waters projects in the Atlanta area	Tempe, AZ
3/14 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Proctor Creek Celebration of Success		Atlanta, GA
3/15 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	Faegre Baker Daniels Energy & Environment Symposium		Washington, DC
3/15 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Interstate Council on Water Policy		Arlington, VA
3/15 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs		Cross Boundary Implications for Pre-Border Prevention and Post-Border Mitigation of Invasive Species	
3/18 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Governors Association Western Working Lands		Denver, CO
3/26 Rick May	Senior National Adviser for Recreation	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
			World Water Forum Brasilia		Brazil
			American Sportfishing Association	Recreation and fishing	Crystal City, VA

3/28 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Scotia Howard Weil 47th Annual Energy Conference		New Orleans, LA
3/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	North American Wildlife and Resources Conference	Initiatives with invasive species	Norfolk, VA
3/28 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Quarterly Self-Governance Consultation, Sharee Freeman		Washington, DC
3/29 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference		Norfolk, VA
4/3 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Wind Finance Meeting		New York, NY
4/4 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum		Princeton, NJ
4/4 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Bakken Federal Executives Group	DOI energy policy	N/A (Conference Call)
4/5 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council	Promotion of sport fishing and boating to increase participation	Washington, DC
4/5 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Center for Growth and Opportunity	Public land management	Las Vegas, NV
4/6 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association's 43rd Annual Indian Law Conference	Indian Child Welfare Act Panel	Scottsdale, AZ
4/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	National Water Resources Association		Washington, DC
4/9 TBD	TBD	TBD	National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Legislative Summit		Washington, DC
4/10 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	"Tuesday Morning Group" - Virginia Institute for Public Policy	Interior energy portfolio	Richmond, VA
4/10 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation	Federal Offshore Oil & Gas Leasing & Development	New Orleans, LA
4/10 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management		Sheperdstown, WV
4/12 Alan Mikkelsen	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Reclamation	Klamath Water Users Association Annual Meeting		Klamath Falls, OR
4/12 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
4/13 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Kate MacGregor	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)		Washington, DC

4/16 Ben Cassidy	Senior Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Council of Snowmobile Associations	Motorized access Administration's energy policy strategy	Washington, DC
4/16 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Northern California Power Agency Conference		Washington, DC
4/17 Doug Domenech David Palumbo and	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Flag Day		American Samoa
4/17 Gray Payne	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	National Association of Clean Water Agencies	Infrastructure	Washington, DC
4/17 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Board of Directors		Phoenix, AZ
			BLM National Project Support Team Meeting		
4/18 Austin Ewell	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	HayWired Rollout		Berkeley, CA
4/18 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	National Indian Gaming Association Annual Membership Meeting		Las Vegas, NV
4/19 Tucker Davis	Advisor	Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement	Virginia Coal and Energy Alliance's Annual Arbor Day Celebration		Vansant, VA
4/24 Susan Combs	Acting Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Texas Association of Business	Reorganization	Washington, DC
4/24 Susan Combs	Acting Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Texas Farm Bureau		Washington, DC
4/25 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Flag Day		American Samoa
4/25 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	2018 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference		Albuquerque, NM
4/26 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Coalition of Large Tribes		Albuquerque, NM
4/27 Kathleen Benedetto	Senior Adviser	Bureau of Land Management	Good Samaritan Protection to Enhance Abandoned Mine Land Cleanup		Golden, CO (Colorado School of Mines)
4/30 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Offshore Technology Conference		Houston, TX
4/30 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Technology Conference		Houston, TX
4/30 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes		Artesia, NM
4/30 Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session		Lakewood, CO
5/1 Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session		Albuquerque, NM
5/2 Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session		Grand Junction, CO
5/3 Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session		Cheyenne, WY

5/3 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Offshore Technology Conference	Houston, TX
5/3 Rick May	Senior National Adviser for Recreation	Office of the Secretary	RV Power Breakfast	Elkhart, IN

OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Yes - drafted	?		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed	Members of the Nat'l Mining Association	
	Open		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
Yes - drafted	Open	MT tribal leaders	Sonja Twoleggins (406) 252-2550
	?	Environmental lawyers	
	Open	AK tribal leaders	Alaska Federation Nation (907) 274-3611
Yes - drafted	Open	Oil and gas industry	
	?		
	?	Tribal	
	Closed	Chemical plant managers from LA Federal and state government/private government contractors	
	Open		
	?		

	Open ?	Energy industry, state and federal	
	?		
	?		
	Open		
	?		
Yes	Open unless objections	Mining industry	
	Open	Local residents	
Yes	?		
	Closed		
	Open ?	Scientists, engineers, students Idaho ranchers	
Yes - drafted	Closed	Congressional members	
	Open ?	Oil and gas industry	
TBD Yes	TBD	TBD	
	Closed	Board of Directors, staff Federal and state government rangeland weeds experts	Slade Franklin, (307) 777-6585
	?		
	Open	OR water users	
	Closed	Representatives of Mexico, Canada, and US governments	



Reviewed	Closed		
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	?	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?	Various tribal leaders	
	Closed	Offshore industry and oil and gas	
	?	Energy industry, federal and state officials.	
	Open		
	Closed		
	Closed	Leaders of the State Policy Network	
	Closed	State representatives and stakeholders	
	Open	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?		

?			
?			
Open	Members of the oil and gas community, local business leaders		
Closed			

	Open	Colorado River water users
Yes	?	CSF/DSC members
Yes	?	DSC members
	Closed	
Yes	Open	Retailers
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	Northern and Central CA water issues
	?	Law students and Fed Soc members
	?	Tribal leaders
	?	
	Closed	
	One trade publication	Agency officials, mitigation bankers, investors, Congressional members/staff
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	
	Closed	
	Closed	USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USGS, and BSEE
	Open (limited)	
	Open (local)	Tribal
	?	Tribal
	Closed	FLA Board of Directors

	?	Tribal
Yes	?	
Yes	Closed ?	House Western Caucus Staff Tribal
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	? Open	Interior and Agriculture employees Tribal leaders
	?  Open	Tribal Federal officials, environmental NGOs, local governments, business groups Local community members, elected officials, others interested in the legacy of Frederick Douglass
	Open Open	Industry
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal
Yes	Closed	FreedomWorks volunteers
	?	Tribal
	Open	Western water users

Yes	Closed	
	?	Members of the Coral Reef Task Force
	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
	Open	Officials from the region
	?	Tribal leaders
Yes	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
		International group of senior level energy industry executives and government regulators
	Closed	
	Closed	
	Closed	CXO Fellows
Yes	?	Industry
	?	Western Caucus Foundation members
	?	
	?	
	Closed	Agency officials
Yes	Open	Policy experts, managers
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	Forum attendees
		Retailers/manufacturers in the fishing industry
	?	

Closed	
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
?	Tribal
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
Open	Offshore wind industry
Open	Industry, trade associations
?	
Closed	Council members
Closed	Academics and students
?	FedBar Organizations, Law
Open	Students
	NWRA members and water users
?	2,000 members of the organization
Closed	Statewide public policy groups and stakeholders
Closed	Lawyers, landmen, regulators
Open	Conservation agency officials from U.S., Mexico, and Canada
Open	Irrigated agriculture
?	Tribal
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	

	Closed	Snowmobile Assn. members
Yes	Closed	Public power officials
	?	?
	Closed	NACWA Board of Directors
	?	Team members
	Open	General public, state and local partners, other stakeholders
	?	Tribal
	Open	300 sixth grade students, federal and state agencies
Yes	?	Business, association, and civic leaders
	Closed	30 Texas Farm Bureau leaders
	?	
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal
	?	Federal agencies, Congressional, state agencies, industry
		Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector
	Open	Industry, trade associations,
	Open	government, academia
	?	Law enforcement officers, tribal members
		Denver-based DOI SES
	Closed	employees
	Closed	Stakeholders/AG
	?	CLUB 20
	Closed	Cheyenne-area DOI employees

Open	Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector
Open	RV enthusiasts, outdoor industry

## **SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT FORM**

Please fill out the following form if you have been requested to represent DOI at an event as a speaker or panelist and e-mail the completed form to Eli Nachmany and Russell Newell of the Office of Communications. Please also CC Communications Director Laura Rigas. If already drafted and applicable, please attach current talking points or suggested remarks for the event, or send them as soon as possible.

**Principal speaking:**

**Title:**

**Bureau/Office:**

**Date of Event:**

**Location:**

**Event Title and Organizer:**

**Topic:**

**Length and Format of Remarks:**

**Open or Closed Press:**

**Nature of Press and Expected Coverage (e.g. trade press, local reporters, national media, etc.):**

**Audience:**

**Point of Contact for Event:**



# Conversation Contents

## REVISED Weekly Report May 6-12

### Attachments:

/61. REVISED Weekly Report May 6-12/1.1 Weekly Report to the Secretary May 6-12.docx

**"Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Mon May 07 2018 07:24:27 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
Alan Mikkelsen <amikkelsen@usbr.gov>, Alex Sterhan <asterhan@usbr.gov>, Andrea Travnicek <andrea\_travnicek@ios.doi.gov>, "Appel, Elizabeth" <elizabeth.appel@bia.gov>, Aurelia Skipwith <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>, Benjamin Cassidy <benjamin\_cassidy@ios.doi.gov>, Billy Dove <william\_dove@ios.doi.gov>, Brenda Burman <bburman@usbr.gov>, Cally Younger <cally.younger@sol.doi.gov>, Casey Hammond <casey\_hammond@ios.doi.gov>, Casey Stemler <casey\_stemler@fws.gov>, Catherine Gulac <catherine\_gulac@ios.doi.gov>, Christina Summers <christina\_summers@ibc.doi.gov>, Daniel Jorjani <daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov>, David Bernhardt <(b) (6)>, Debrah McBride <debrah.mcbride@bia.gov>, Doug Domenech <doug\_domenech@ios.doi.gov>, Downey Magallanes <downey\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov>, Edward Keable <edward.keable@sol.doi.gov>, Elinor Werner <elinor\_werner@ios.doi.gov>, Evan Wilson <evan\_wilson@ios.doi.gov>, Gareth Rees <gareth\_rees@ios.doi.gov>, Gary Lawkowski <gary\_lawkowski@ios.doi.gov>, Heather Swift <heather\_swift@ios.doi.gov>, James Voyles <james\_voyles@ios.doi.gov>, Jim Cason <james\_cason@ios.doi.gov>, Joe Balash <joseph\_balash@ios.doi.gov>, John Bockmier <john\_bockmier@ios.doi.gov>, John Tahsuda <john.tahsuda@bia.gov>, Juliette Lillie <juliette\_lillie@ios.doi.gov>, Kate MacGregor <kate\_macgregor@ios.doi.gov>, Kathleen Benedetto <kbenedetto@blm.gov>, Katie Mills <katie\_mills@ios.doi.gov>, Kerry Rae <kerry\_rae@ios.doi.gov>, Laura Rigas <Laura\_Rigas@ios.doi.gov>, Lori Mashburn <lori\_mashburn@ios.doi.gov>, Mariagrazia Caminiti

**To:**

<marigrace.caminiti@sol.doi.gov>, Matthew Dermody  
<matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>, Maureen Foster  
<maureen\_foster@ios.doi.gov>, Micah Chambers  
<micah\_chambers@ios.doi.gov>, Nikolao Pula  
<nikolao\_pula@ios.doi.gov>, Russell Newell  
<russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>, Scott Cameron  
<scott\_cameron@ios.doi.gov>, Scott Hommel  
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<susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>, Tim Petty  
<timothy\_petty@ios.doi.gov>, Tim Williams  
<timothy\_williams@ios.doi.gov>, Todd Willens  
<todd\_willens@ios.doi.gov>, Todd Wynn  
<todd\_wynn@ios.doi.gov>, Vincent DeVito  
<Vincent\_DeVito@ios.doi.gov>, Zack Gambill  
<zack\_gambill@fws.gov>

**Subject:**

REVISED Weekly Report May 6-12

**Attachments:**

Weekly Report to the Secretary May 6-12.docx

All,

Attached is a revised version of the report. Corrections had to be made to some inaccuracies. Please only use this version and disregard and destroy any previous ones.

Thanks,

Matthew Dermody  
Special Assistant  
Office of the Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
202-513-7778

 [Weekly Report to the Secretary May 6-12.docx](#)

**WEEKLY REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
MAY 6-12, 2018**

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt will be on official travel from May 8-11 in Sacramento, CA.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Todd Willens will be in the office all week.

**Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

No updates to report.

**15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

No updates to report.

**Awareness**

No updates to report.

**OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Congressional Hearings, and Travel**

Nothing to report.

**Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

**NEW CASES:**

Nothing significant to report.

**SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:**

*Dine CARE v. Zinke (D.N.M.)*

On April 23, the court issued decision dismissing all of Plaintiff's claims against the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with prejudice. Plaintiff challenged the BLM's compliance with NEPA and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) for over 300 Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) in the BLM's Farmington Field Office in New Mexico. Previously, on March 31, 2018, the court had issued a brief order stating that it planned to deny Plaintiff's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) claims and grant in part the NHPA claims. But in a 132-page

opinion, the judge changed his mind and held that the BLM had indeed complied with NEPA and, with respect to NHPA, that the BLM's "record documentation for these archaeological sites meets the low bar that the documentation standard erects."

*Public Service Company of New Mexico v. Barboan, et al.* (U.S. Supreme Court)

The U.S. Supreme Court, on April 30, denied the Public Service Company of New Mexico's (PNM) petition for *certiorari* seeking review of a Tenth Circuit decision. The Tenth Circuit Court previously affirmed a decision of the District Court of New Mexico dismissing a condemnation action pursued by PNM against two Navajo allotments in which the Navajo Nation (Nation) had acquired fractional interests through escheat and the Land Buy-Back Program. The 10th Circuit Court determined that 25 U.S.C. § 357 does not permit the condemnation of tribal interests; as such, it was proper for the lower court to dismiss the condemnation action against allotments in which the Nation owned fractional interests. Moreover, the Court, in a footnote, provided that condemnation could not be pursued against individually-owned interests in an allotment while a company simultaneously or previously negotiated a right-of-way from a tribe over its fractional interests. The Tenth Circuit relied upon the plain text of 25 U.S.C. § 357, the Indian law canons of construction, and the Eighth Circuit's 34 year old decision in *Nebraska Public Power District v. 100.95 Acres of Land in Thurston County*, 719 F.2d 956 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1983).

*06 Livestock Company, et al.* (2018)

The Interior Board of Land Appeals (Board) affirmed BLM's grazing decisions on summary judgment because Appellants failed to show disputed issues of material fact. Opinion confirms that not all grazing appeals require a trial-like hearing. In upholding BLM's use of appendices, tiering, and incorporation of reference in its NEPA document, the Board also affirmed principles and tools integral to Departmental NEPA streamlining objectives. Finally, the Board affirmed BLM's broad discretion to manage grazing privileges, including BLM's discretion to manage lands at the allotment scale as opposed to at the pasture scale.

*Simmons v. Smith* (8th Cir.) - Niobrara National Scenic River Boundary Litigation

On April 30, the 8th Circuit found that the NPS property designated a boundary for the Niobrara National Scenic River. Appellant challenged the 2007 boundary delineation that occurred on his property, arguing that the NPS utilized an improper legal standard for the designation. Appellant also alleged that he was subject to disparate treatment and that NPS acted in bad faith when it identified the boundary on his property. The court rejected all of Appellant's claims.

*WildEarth Guardians v. BLM* (D. Colo.) - Clean Air Act Challenge to Oil and Gas Leasing

BLM's Decisions Affirmed. Plaintiff asserted that BLM violated the Clean Air Act (CAA) in two 2015 oil and gas lease sale decisions, because certain parcels are located in an ozone nonattainment area, and BLM had declined to perform a full determination of conformity with the State Implementation Plan (SIP) before authorizing leasing. EPA's conformity rule requires agencies to perform a conformity analysis if the total of direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect emissions from the proposed action would exceed a specific threshold (100 tons per year for ozone precursors). BLM had concluded that a conformity analysis was not required because future emissions of ozone precursors potentially resulting from the lease sales were too uncertain to be considered "reasonably foreseeable." The court affirmed BLM's decisions, concluding that

plaintiff “ha[d] not carried its burden to show that BLM acted arbitrarily or capriciously in determining that the information in its possession was insufficient to permit it to make a reasonable forecast of indirect emissions” for purposes of evaluating whether a conformity determination was required.

## **OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:**

Challenges to Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante NM modifications (D.D.C.)

On April 30, three Utah counties (San Juan County, Garfield County, and Kane County) filed motions to intervene as defendants in the three cases challenging President Trump's modifications to Bears Ears National Monument and the two cases challenging President Trump's modifications to Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. DOJ has requested that the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture indicate the position they intend to take on the motions.

*San Juan Citizens Alliance v. BLM* (D. Colo.) – Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Litigation  
On April 26, Plaintiffs filed a cross-motion for summary judgment against the BLM, arguing that (1) BLM violated FOIA by failing to conduct a reasonable search for documents; (2) the BLM employees, Office of the Solicitor attorney, and DOJ attorney should be held in contempt for failing to disclose that certain categories of documents did not exist in response to Plaintiff's FOIA; (3) the BLM unlawfully withheld documents responsive to FOIA.

*Clean Air Council v. U.S.* (E.D. Pa.) - Climate Change

The court has ordered the United States to reply to plaintiff's opposition to our motion to dismiss by May 3. The reply will address Plaintiffs' allegations of state-caused endangerment and deprivation of life, liberty and property. Plaintiffs in this case are an environmental group and two children. The case is similar to the *Juliana* case in the District of Oregon in that Plaintiffs in this case allege that the deregulatory policies of the Administration violate supposed constitutional rights and the public trust doctrine.

*Friends of Etna Turpentine Camp, Inc. v. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Department of the Interior* (M.D. Fla.)

Plaintiff filed a complaint in December 2017, in the District Court seeking injunctive relief for the FWS' failure to respond with the statutory time limit under the FOIA. Plaintiff sought documents regarding the Suncoast Parkway II, Etna Turpentine Camp, the effect the parkway would have on species in the right of way of the proposed toll road and Biological Opinions regarding the applied for permit by the Florida Department of Transportation. The Etna Turpentine Camp was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2009. The FWS has provided a response to Plaintiff's request and has provided all releasable documents.

*Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Inc. v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)* (N.D. Ala.)

Plaintiffs filed this amended complaint September 13, 2017, challenging the Corps' issuance of a Section 404 permit for Black Creek Mine, located on tributaries of the Black Warrior River in Jefferson County, Alabama, including the Corps' consultation with FWS under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). On April 4, the United States filed its response to Plaintiffs' motion for summary judgment. In response to Plaintiffs' claim that the informal consultation process was

not completed because of the Service's concurrence with the Corps' "not likely to adversely affect" determination specifically mentioned only the conclusion as to listed species, and did not mention critical habitat, the United States countered that because the letter did not include an express nonconcurrence as to critical habitat, the FWS clearly intended to concur with the Corps' finding, and the omission (which was inadvertent) had no substantive impact on the outcome of the consultation. Plaintiffs' response, filed April 25, argues that whether or not the omission was inadvertent, the failure to complete consultation was a violation of the ESA. The United States' reply is due May 16.

*Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town v. Interior* (10<sup>th</sup> Cir.)

Moot court for oral argument will be May 10. Argument is scheduled for May 15.

*Williams, et al. v. United States* (S.D. Miss.)

Plaintiffs filed a lawsuit pursuant to the FTCA in the Southern District of Mississippi, seeking personal injury and property damages totaling \$13,699,036. Plaintiffs allege that a National Park Service Ranger was negligent in making a U-turn to follow a vehicle that committed a traffic infraction resulting in a vehicle accident that seriously injured Mr. and Mrs. Williams and their two children. The United States' Answer is due June 9, 2018.

*Sturgeon v. Frost* (Supreme Court)

The United States' response to Plaintiff's certiorari petition is due May 7. At issue is a Ninth Circuit decision affirming National Park Service's (NPS's) authority to regulate hovercraft use on certain waters within Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Conservation System Units in Alaska. Citing the *Katie John* precedent, the Ninth Circuit held that the United States has an implied reservation of water rights in the Nation River, rendering it "public lands" for purposes of ANILCA.

*James Lee Williams v. United States*, No. 18-1689 (Fed. Cir.)

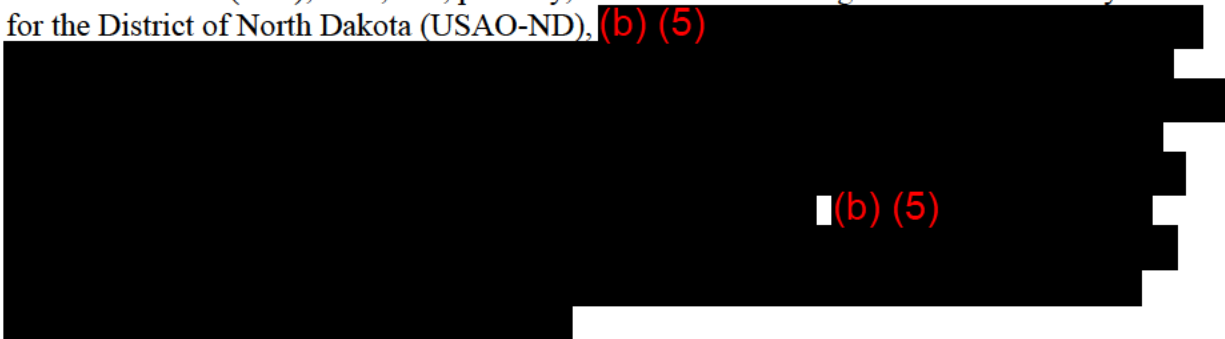
In May 2017, James Lee Williams filed a complaint against the United States, claiming that the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and BLM, among other non-federal defendants, violated his constitutional rights by denying him the right to acquire land and water rights on an area of land in the Colorado River known as Yuma Island. Mr. Williams is seeking \$25 million in damages. The court granted the United States' motion to dismiss, and closed the case on January 31. On March 12, Plaintiff filed a notice of appeal in the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Plaintiff's opening brief is due April 27, and the United States' responsive brief is due on May 4.

*United States v. Uinta Valley Shoshone Tribe* (D. Utah)

In October 2017, the United States Attorneys' Office, upon consultation with the Solicitor's Office (SOL), filed a criminal complaint against a group self-described as the "Uinta Valley Shoshone Tribe" and three of its officers seeking an injunction to prevent the Defendants from selling fraudulent hunting and fishing licenses. The licenses purportedly allow the holders to harvest wildlife on land held in trust for the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. The Uinta Valley Shoshone Tribe is not a federally recognized tribe and has no regulatory authority within the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. The United States alleges wire fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343. On April 30, the parties submitted cross-motions for summary judgment.

*State of North Dakota v. Chase Iron Eyes* (North Dakota District Court, Morton County)

The State of North Dakota has charged Chase Iron Eyes with inciting a riot and trespass related to his activity at the Dakota Access Pipe Line protest. Mr. Iron Eyes is one of 32 defendants in this criminal prosecution. Mr. Iron Eyes' defense team has served at least 18 subpoena *duces tecum* on federal law enforcement agencies that were present at the protest including the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), NPS, and, possibly, the FWS. According to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of North Dakota (USAO-ND), (b) (5)



(b) (5)

*Turner v. USFWS* (S.D. Ill.)

On April 13, the Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a motion to dismiss (MTD) the complaint of Seth Turner under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP) 12(b)(1) for failure to state a claim related to issuance of the incidental take permit by the FWS for take associated with operation of the Pioneer Trail Wind Farm. Mr. Turner, a spelunker, alleges he was harmed when the FWS approved mitigation credit for cave gating of Griffith Cave, a cave located on private property, under ESA Section 10. Should the court fail to grant the FWS' motion, the DOJ has further alleged that Mr. Turner's 500 paragraph, 88 page complaint violates FRCP 8, and requests that the Court require the pro-se litigant to shorten the length of his complaint.

*In re Waters of the Klamath River Basin*, (Klamath Co. Cir. Ct.) - Water Rights Adjudication Involving Water Rights for the Klamath Tribes and the FWS

On April 27, the County Circuit Court issued a case management order setting out the scheduling for resolving exceptions. The adjudication has been broken down into Phases 1-3. Phase 1 dealt with procedural issues and Phase 2 deals with minor errors. Phase 3 deals with the merits, resolving the exceptions that parties have filed to the Oregon Water Resource Department's determinations on water rights claims. The Court broke Phase 3 into two parts. In Part 1, the parties will resolve various cross-cutting legal issues. In Part 2, remaining exceptions will be resolved. In the April 27 order, the court broke Phase 3, Part 1 into three groups for briefing: (1) pre-1909 and non-tribal federal reserved water rights, (2) Walton and Klamath Termination Act rights, and (3) tribal reserved water rights. He set out a briefing schedule only for the first group, with Exceptors' opening motions due August 3; responses in support of Exceptors due August 24; responses in opposition to Exceptors due November 16; replies due January 18, 2019; and oral argument set for February 26-28, 2019. This first group of Phase 1, Part 1 will involve BOR and FWS water rights claims.

*National Wildlife Federation, et al. v. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), et al.* (D. Or.)  
- "FCRPS BiOp Litigation"

On April 17, the court amended its 2016 remand order to eliminate the requirement that NMFS issue a new biological opinion by December 31. The court extended the deadline for a new biological opinion to March 26, 2021, to coincide with completion of the ongoing NEPA analysis. The court invited motions for further relief to govern interim operations in the event that NMFS does not issue a biological opinion by the expiration of the current opinion on December 31.

*Allen, et al. v. U.S.* (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.)

Appellants' Opening Brief was filed on April 20, challenging an Order Denying Plaintiffs' Motion for Summary Judgment (MSJ) and Granting Defendants MSJ issued in District Court on November 27, 2017. Appellants Ukiah Valley Indians of Pinoleville, who are or were part of the Pinoleville Tribe residing on the Reservation, sought to organize as a separate half-blood tribe under the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). In January 2015, a Ninth Circuit Settlement Agreement in *Allen v. US*, Case No. 12-16573, mandated DOI decide Appellants' eligibility to organize a separate tribe, and the AS-IA authorized the Pacific Regional Director (RD) to issue a final decision. On April 1, 2016, the RD found Appellants ineligible to organize a half-blood tribe because they are among individuals for whom the Reservation was established, noting they or their ancestors participated in organizing the Tribe and are thus ineligible to create a half-blood tribe consistent with definitions of "tribe" as an organized group residing on one reservation. 25 U.S.C. § 479; 25 C.F.R. § 81.1(w)(2).

*Upper Lake Pomo Association, et al. v. Cecil Andrus, et al.* (N.D. Cal.)

On April 13, a Motion to Hold Defendants in Contempt of the Order Granting Plaintiffs' Motion for Partial Summary Judgment was filed on behalf of the daughter of decedent Amerdine Jackson, who was a member of the Habemotolel Pomo of Upper Lake (Tribe). The Tribe was restored to federal recognition pursuant to the *Andrus* litigation, which provides that lands previously owned by Indians and Indian Tribes shall or may be taken into trust. Plaintiff claims the Order mandates that BIA acquire her Mother's property in trust, but probate has not been completed and is stalled because a deed purporting to transfer the land to the United States in trust was recorded by Ms. Jackson with the County in 1998, although it was never approved by BIA. The State probate court apparently concluded it does not have jurisdiction, so BIA executed a Notice of Non-Acceptance of Recorded Deed, but it is unclear if this was filed with the probate court. Our response is due May 4.

*United States v. Estate of E. Wayne Hage* (D. Nev.)

Following the oral argument on April 13, when the Ninth Circuit panel got sidetracked by Hage's (inaccurate) statement that the federal agencies have denied his request to divert his water rights, for an appeal limited to damages assessed for his trespass grazing, DOJ filed a supplemental letter with the Ninth Circuit on April 25, with documentation rebutting Hage's inaccurate claims. On April 26, the Ninth Circuit issued an Order withdrawing the appeal from submission and referring it to a Senior Circuit Judge to serve as a mediator and explore whether the parties wish to mediate the matter. The order to mediate was not unexpected in light of comments made by the Ninth Circuit panel at oral argument in response to Hage's misleading assertions about federal agency actions regarding diversion of the Hage Estate's water rights.

## **NON-LITIGATION MATTERS:**



### The Semiquincentennial Commission

The Semiquincentennial Commission is a 33 member independent commission with 24 voting members (including members of Congress and private citizens) and 9 non-voting ex official members (Including the Secretary of the Interior and other Federal Government officials) charged with planning activities and events to celebrate the nation's 250th birthday on July 4, 2026. The Act directs the Secretary to enter into an arrangement with a nonprofit organization to perform administrative, financial and procurement functions for the Commission. The National Parks Branch is coordinating with General Law and the Ethics office to identify any legal or ethics issues relating to the Commission and provide legal advice regarding the agreement with the nonprofit and for the Commission moving forward.

### Implementation of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement

Under procedures developed by the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office (SIWRO), Division of Water Resources (DWR) provides support in the implementation of this recently enacted settlement, including drafting various documents necessary for the Secretary's execution of the settlement agreement and related documents. As part of this process, the Solicitor's Office requests formal concurrence from the Department of Justice in our view that (b) (5)

(b) (5) Meanwhile, DWR will provide a draft recommendation from SOL to the Secretary to the Front Office for review and finalization. SIWRO advises that a signing ceremony may be scheduled for mid-May and wants to expedite a final package through SOL and Executive Secretariat for surnaming by all relevant bureaus.

### Wisteria Island Title Dispute

DLR is finalizing a draft letter regarding affirmative litigation for Front Office review. The letter will be submitted within the next few weeks.

### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Lease Sale 251

DMR has completed review of the Final Notice of Sale (FNOS) for Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lease Sale 251, scheduled for August 15. It is now with the front office for surname. Full Departmental clearance and publication of the FNOS is required before July 15, to hold the sale as scheduled.

### BOEM National OCS Leasing Program

On May 4, BOEM is briefing the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management (ASLMM) on how Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions will be analyzed in the 2019-2024 Oil and Gas Program (2019-2024 Program). DMR has provided advice to BOEM and will be participating in that briefing.

### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) Production Safety Systems Rule

On April 26, OMB communicated a determination that it will treat the rule as significant, triggering a 60-day interagency review. The Solicitor's Office is working with the BSEE to complete the review process for the preamble, rule text, regulatory impact analysis, and environmental assessment, so that the Department can share final versions with OMB.

#### BSEE Well Control Rule Proposed Revisions

On April 27, BSEE transmitted to the Office of the Federal Register for publication a notice of proposed rulemaking proposing to modify elements of the regulations promulgated through the 2016 Final Well Control Rule.

#### OCS Renewables Safety Jurisdiction

DMR met with supervisory legal counsel at the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) on May 1 to discuss the question of (b) (5)

DMR briefed the BSEE Director on the issue on April 26.

#### Enforcement of Demand Letter

A Knoxville attorney is providing legal advice to the Eastern Regional of BIA as the agency assists the Catawba Tribe to recover approximately \$18,000.00 in damages to timber on the trust lands of the Catawba Indian Reservation. The trespass occurred in 2016. The trespassers are believed to be both tribal and non-tribal individuals.

#### Mountain Valley Pipeline

- Protests: One protester abandoned a “tree sit” on federal lands, and the tree stand has been dismantled. Two protesters remain encamped in trees, blocking necessary tree clearing and construction activities. The U.S. Forest Service (FS) made multiple arrests this week as protest support teams attempted to resupply the protesters in violation of the FS’ closure order for the area. Protesters have erected five other tree sits on private lands.

- Variance request: On April 23, after consulting with SOL, BLM signed a variance authorizing Mountain Valley Pipeline to clear trees after a March 31 tree clearing deadline. Mountain Valley Pipeline had agreed to the March 31 deadline in order to provide additional protective measures for migratory birds. In support of the variance request, Mountain Valley Pipeline's attorneys attached M-37050 ("The Migratory Bird Treaty Act Does Not Prohibit Incidental Take"), agreed to conduct avian surveys before tree clearing, and transmitted comments of the FWS determining that the proposed tree clearing would not require re-initiation of consultation. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) ultimately approved the variance after considering the signatures and views of the other Federal agencies.

- Notice to proceed: On April 23, after consulting with SOL, BLM issued a notice to proceed with road widening and vegetation removal on access roads.

#### National Park Service, Fort Donelson National Battlefield, Visitor’s Center Design and Build Renovation Project. (Update as of April 24)

The National Park Service entered into a firm-fixed price design and build contract with KHDM Construction LLC, an (8)(a) small business contractor, to renovate Fort Donelson Visitor’s Center in Dover, Tennessee. The contract value is \$965,212.00. The period of performance date was September 2016; however, the project has not been completed due, in part, to a breakdown in negotiations for additional costs associated with completing the project. The project delay has caught local media attention. NPS requested a revised cost proposal to complete the project;

however, the contractor failed to respond to the NPS' request. The contractor has also been unresponsive to the contracting officer's recent attempts to reach the contractor by phone and email. The SOL advised the Bureau Procurement Chief and Lead Contracting Officer on Termination for Default procedures and assisted with coordinating concurrence with Small Business Administration (SBA). After consulting with SOL, the Contracting Officer has determined that terminating the contract for default is in the best interest of the Government. SOL has reviewed the required Termination for Default Notice to the contractor for legal sufficiency and will continue to provide advice and guidance throughout the re-procurement process.

**NPS Bike Sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Arlington County**  
The Parks Branch advised the NPS on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NPS (acting through the Superintendent of the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP)) and Arlington County, Virginia, concerning the implementation of the regional bike sharing system in the Arlington County portion of GWMP. The NPS and Arlington County currently intend to establish bike sharing stations on NPS-administered property at Theodore Roosevelt Island, Gravelly Point, and the Marine Corps War Memorial. The MOU will be signed in the near future.

**Meeting held on April 20 to discuss the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument**  
The City of Birmingham and the Federal Government are co-owners of the A.G. Gaston Motel (Gaston Motel), the cornerstone land improvement for the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument (BICR). The plan is to renovate the Gaston Motel, using initial funding provided by the City of Birmingham. Preparatory matters to that end are proceeding under a Framework Agreement, and the plan is to transition operations under a more detailed Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA). Earlier work on the final draft CMA was suspended in order to allow the new leadership for the City of Birmingham to review of draft CMA agreement and to otherwise become more familiar with the BICR. On April 20, representatives from the SOL Southeast Region (SER), met with the Chief Assistant City Attorney for the City of Birmingham, and several senior staff at the SE Regional Office of the NPS to discuss the current state of affairs for BICR and the final draft CMA. While the April 20, meeting was very productive, it was determined that there were a number of outstanding matters that needed to be addressed before the draft final CMA was ready for legal review.

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park - Gatlinburg Fires - Administrative Tort Claims**  
On April 24, the Torts Practice Branch received 241 additional administrative claims in excess of 75 million dollars, which relate to the November 2016 Chimney Tops 2 fires in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and surrounding areas. Claimants assert the Park's fire suppression efforts were negligent and it failed to follow required protocols. These additional claims bring the total number of administrative claims filed to date to more than 440. Combined, the claim amounts exceed \$2 billion dollars.

From April 23 - 25, Tort Practice Branch lead attorneys participated in witness interviews and briefings by the Great Smokey Mountains NPS leadership and staff regarding the 2016 Chimney Tops 2 fires in the Great Smokey Mountains and surrounding areas. Fourteen people died and hundreds were injured. Moreover more than 2,400 houses and structures were damaged or


destroyed by the fire. To date, more than 440 administrative tort claims have been filed and the total claim amount exceeds \$2 billion dollars.

*Or. Natural Desert Ass'n v. Jewell* (9th Cir. Oct. 20, 2016); *Or. Natural Desert Ass'n v. Zinke* (D. Or. Apr. 18, 2017)

Proposed attorneys' fees settlement in Steens Wind case. Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) fee settlement recommendation memorandum will be submitted for Front Office review after BLM has completed its review and briefing.

#### California WaterFix (CWF)

Cases in chief for the protestants before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) water right hearing for CWF, Part 2, closed on Wednesday, April 25, 2018. Parties to the hearing now await a ruling from the SWRCB on a rebuttal schedule. CVP contractors and Reclamation are preparing for the CWF to be a State-only project, with only minimal use by the CVP, or its contractors. Because a State-only CWF may have impacts to the water supply of the CVP, Reclamation is beginning to build an accounting model in CalSimII to account for a State-only operated CWF. This will include outreach to CVP contractor (and CWF protestant) modelers, as well as modelers for Metropolitan Water District (MWD), the State Water Contractors (SWC), and the California Division of Water Resources (CDWR). (b) (5)



#### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Significant Litigation Deadlines are reported separately.

#### **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS**

##### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On May 8, Susan Combs, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, will be at the Continuity of Operations Procedures Exercise.

On May 7-9, Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith will be making a site visit to Jackson, Mississippi.

On May 8, Deputy Assistant Secretary Ryan Hambleton will be at the Continuity of Operations Procedures Exercise.

From May 4-7, FWS Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan will be on leave.

From May 6-7, NPS Deputy Director Dan Smith will be in the office. On May 8, Dan will be at the Continuity of Operations Procedures Exercise. On May 9, he will be back in the office.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**[NEW]** From May 2-31, the Federal Aviation Administration and FWS will seek public comments on the draft environmental assessment for repair and replacement of damaged sections of a seawall at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial. The seawall protects the southern portion of Sand Island and Henderson Airfield's runway from erosion. Henderson Airfield is an emergency landing site for transpacific commercial flights. This action is non-controversial. Outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, with targeted stakeholder outreach. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The week of May 6, FWS will announce updated eagle priors and seek comment on several options for applying them. "Priors" are inputs for the collision risk model (CRM) FWS uses to estimate eagle fatalities at wind energy facilities. In the 2016 final rule revising the eagle incidental take permit regulations, FWS committed to update the golden eagle priors and explore whether sufficient data exist to develop separate bald eagle exposure and collision priors. The revised priors incorporate much more data than the original priors; enough to create species-specific priors. The updated collision prior is slightly lower than the current prior for golden eagles and higher for bald eagles. No outreach is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. 05/02/2018

On May 8, FWS Northeast Regional Director Wendi Weber will give a keynote address at the 36th Annual National Native American Fish and Wildlife Society Conference. This year's conference is hosted by the Narragansett Tribe and is being held in Providence, Rhode Island. FWS will provide presentations on coastal resilience projects in Rhode Island, eagle policy and permitting, white-nose syndrome in bats, and a possible field trip to the Rhode Island NWR complex. (04/11/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 8 and 10, public meetings are scheduled to discuss the Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct a 30-day public scoping period and prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Skookumchuck Wind Energy Project Habitat Conservation Plan in Washington. On or around May 3, FWS expects publication in the *Federal Register* of the NOI. The FWS will be preparing an EIS to evaluate the issuance of an Incidental Take Permit for marbled murrelet, bald eagle, and golden eagle for a proposed wind energy project in Lewis County, Washington. The project is expected to be controversial with conservation organizations (e.g., American Bird Conservancy, Audubon Society, and Washington Forest Law Center). FWS has received two Freedom of Information Act requests related to the project. A communications plan has been shared with FWS HQ; outreach announcing the public scoping period is planned for Washington media, congressional offices, local and state officials, tribes, and stakeholders. (Updated 05/02/2018)

[UPDATE] FWS has granted a two-week extension and the comment period for the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed development of the Crocker Wind Farm in Clark County, South Dakota. It will now close on May 8. We had a request from local citizens to extend the comment period, Geronimo Energy, the developers for the Crocker Wind Farm, is interested in expeditiously moving the process along, however tribal consultation will not take place until mid-May, 2018. FWS issued a press release regarding the extension on April 23. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around May 15, FWS will publish a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2019-20 hunting season. This is the first step in the annual regulatory cycle. The FWS Regulations Committee will recommend the final frameworks at their October meeting. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

[UPDATE] In early May, pending clearance by DOI, FWS will make a final determination on the proposal to reclassify the Tobusch fishhook cactus from endangered to threatened. This plant species has shown significant recovery due in part to collaborative conservation efforts with partners. Supporters of this action include the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and The Nature Conservancy. FWS has gained positive coverage on downlisting proposals, and anticipates more interest when this final determination is announced. A communications plan has been developed. It includes outreach to congressional offices, local and state officials and stakeholders. A news release to media and posting information on social media is planned at time of publication in the *Federal Register*. (Updated 05/02/2018)

### National Park Service

In early May, the NPS plans to release a prospectus for five concession contracts to provide cruise ship services at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Two of the contracts are set aside for the two historic operators identified through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). Cruise ship services contracts have been awarded since 1980 on a 10 year basis. New contract terms are similar to previous contracts, shaped in accordance with both Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve-specific legislation and NPS law and policy. Contracts will be awarded by late October, 2019. The prospectus is in final Department and Solicitor review. (Updated 04/11/18).

On May 6, Yosemite National Park will complete a pilot traffic management program aimed at increasing safety and minimizing long lines at the Arch Rock Entrance Station on California Route 140. The park is working with the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to temporarily stop vehicles on the road leading to the park, allowing traffic to incrementally enter the park on the popular road. This is one of the pilot programs the park is implementing to address traffic congestion, ensure visitor access, and address safety concerns for park visitors. (Updated 04/25/18)



**[NEW]** On or about May 7, Saguaro National Park will initiate a two week public comment period for an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze impacts of the continued traditional harvesting of Saguaro Fruit and Cholla Buds by the Tohono O'odham Nation within Park boundaries. This EA is a requirement of the August 2016 NPS rule, Gathering of Certain Plants by Federally Recognized Indian Tribes for Traditional Purposes (36 CFR 2.6), to establish a management framework for tribes to gather certain plant parts within NPS units for traditional purposes. The harvesting of Saguaro Fruit and Cholla Buds is a long standing tradition of the tribal members. (05/02/2018)

Between May 7 - 10, an NPS planning team will host several public meetings throughout the State of Mississippi as part of the civic engagement phase of a special resource study (SRS) looking at significant civil rights sites in Mississippi, including locations related to the life and murder of Medgar Evers, the lynching of Emmett Till and the murder of three freedom riders. The team will visit five different communities across the state containing resources that were identified in the legislation requiring the SRS. The study will evaluate the potential for inclusion of each site in the national park system based on whether it meets Congressionally-established criteria for significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management. Representatives from Congressman Bennie Thompson's office and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History are expected to participate in the public meetings. PEPC site: [https://parkplanning.nps.gov/MSCR\\_SRS](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/MSCR_SRS) (04/18/18).

Between May 7 - 25, a spending plan will be developed and submitted to the Department for approval for the new Historic Preservation Fund grant program subgrant program (yet to be named). Five million in physical preservation funding was passed as part of the FY 2018 budget to grant "block grant" funding to organizations that will subgrant funding to historic properties of national, State, and local significance listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Development of a spending plan was mandated in the appropriations language. Preservation partners may have questions about the stage of development of this program. (4/25/2018)

Between May 7 – 25, State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices may apply for the remaining funding from the FY 2018 Annual HPF grants that is noticed on [Grants.gov](https://www.dhs.gov/grants). The application deadline 6/30/18. (Updated 4/25/2018)

During the week of May 7, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area staff are participating in a four-day workshop hosted by BLM to discuss alternatives regarding the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument and Kanab Field Office – Escalante Area Resource Management Plans. On April 10, the park and the BLM held its first cooperating agency meeting. The NPS agreed to be a cooperating agency during this planning effort with Glen Canyon National Recreation Area functioning as the NPS point of contact. Consolidated comments from all involved NPS park units were reviewed by the regional office and sent to the BLM on April 13. (04/18/18)

**[NEW]** On May 8 and 9, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore is hosting two public meetings to solicit feedback related to visitor use management within the westernmost portion of the lakeshore. The public will be invited to comment online between May 8 and June 6, 2018. (05/02/2018)

On May 9, Devils Postpile National Monument will announce the temporary summer closure to camping at its 20-site campground to accommodate expanded day-use. The campground area will be open for parking, picnicking, and provide improved river access for fishing. The monument will be developing a long-term plan for the campground to better meet visitor needs. Campers will be encouraged to use the six U.S. Forest Service campgrounds located in the immediate vicinity of the park. (4/25/2018)

By May 10, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Bonnie Clare Road Reconstruction Environmental Assessment and FONSI. Reconstruction work is scheduled to start in August 2018 and be completed by May 2019. This will allow reopening of the northeast entrance to the park and restore public access to Scotty's Castle after massive damage from flooding in October 2015. [PEPC link](#) (Updated 04/18/18)

By May 10, Death Valley National Park and the Ridgecrest BLM office anticipate opening a public comment period on the Keystone Mine Plan of Operations Amendment and accompanying Environmental Assessment. The mine is on BLM land near the park's western border, but the mining plan includes the use of water rights within the park. (updated 04/18/18).

On May 10-11, the NPS will hold public forums and stakeholder sessions to present the [Savannah National Historic Landmark District Integrity & Assessment](#) report. Public comments on the report are also being accepted through June 30. (04/18/18)

**[NEW]** On or about May 11, the NPS will sign the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for an Environmental Assessment (EA) to construct a garage/maintenance building that will be used for two electric-vehicle shuttle vans at Valles Caldera National Preserve. The preferred alternative will be to construct the garage in an already-disturbed location. The construction project is funded by a grant from the Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. The same grant was also used to purchase the shuttle vans and construct a solar photovoltaic panel system to generate electric power/fuel the vans. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 11, Glacier National Park expects to have a signed Finding of No Significant Impact for the Sperry Chalet Next 100 Years Project. The park expects to issue a press release on May 13 with this update. The EA will identify the NPS' preferred alternative, which is to use existing remnant walls to rebuild the structure, replicating and retaining as many historic character features as is practicable, and achieving some modernization in design. (Updated 05/02/2018)

Between May 10-30, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Scotty's Castle Flood Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment and FONSI. This document analyzes repair work planned for historic structures, the cultural landscape, utilities, parking, and walkways to recover from damage from a flash flood in October 2015. The historic district is scheduled to reopen to the public in 2020. [PEPC link](#) (Updated 04/18/18)

**[NEW]** On May 15, Rock Creek Park will host a public meeting at the Silver Spring Library to share information about the ongoing rehabilitation of Beach Drive. Staff from the Federal



Highway Administration, the DC Department of Transportation, DC Water, and the NPS National Capital Region will discuss the current status and the upcoming work on Segment 4 of the project. Segment 4 is the final part of the project and is expected to be finalized in Fall 2019. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** By May 15, Death Valley National Park and Mojave National Preserve will begin efforts to relocate up to 2,500 feral burros from each park. Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue (a nonprofit partner) will fund and carry out the roundups, test burros for disease, relocate them to holding facilities, and domesticate the animals for adoption. This is anticipated to generate public interest. (Updated 05/02/2018)

By May 15, pending Departmental approval, the NPS will publish a Federal Register notice announcing that the Department has authorized the preparation of a World Heritage nomination for the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio. It is recirculating for surname. With nine component properties including those that form Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, and others managed by the State of Ohio, this series of geometric mounds is approximately 2,000 years old. The nomination file, which will take more than a year to draft, will be developed by local proponents in Ohio with guidance from the NPS. Upon completion and review, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks will determine whether the nomination will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee. (Updated 04/18/18).

On May 15, Rock Creek Park will issue a prospectus and begin accepting proposals from vendors to provide equestrian and related services at the park's horse center in Washington, D.C., under a new 10-year concession contract. Services sought include private horse boarding, therapeutic riding programs, instructional camps, guided trail rides and riding lessons. Contract offers must be received by June 15. (04/11/18).

On May 15-16, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council will hold a public meeting in Jamestown, Virginia. This will be the Council's final meeting since trail advisory councils are only authorized for 10 years under the National Trails System Act. Deputy Director Dan Smith plans to attend the first day. (04/12/18)

By May 18, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) expects to issue the Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Muir Woods National Monument Salmon Habitat Enhancement and Bridge Replacement Project. The selected alternative will restore aquatic habitat degraded by riprap that was placed along the creek banks in the 1930s and replace four deteriorated pedestrian bridges that were installed in the 1990s. The project implements part of the 2014 General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. The projects themselves are not expected to be controversial, but there is public interest in ensuring that NPS schedules its projects to reduce cumulative impacts from planned construction work in the area by the Marin County Department of Public Works and the Federal Highways Works Administration. (Updated 04/25/18)

**[NEW]** Between May 19 - 23, the NPS will participate in the largest travel industry trade show in the country, IPW, in Denver, Colorado. The show focuses on international travel to the United States. The NPS has scheduled appointments with 100+ international tour operators to discuss

outdoor recreation opportunities on park lands, policy, regulatory requirements, fees, and other issues. The NPS participates alongside a team of Federal agencies including DOI, FWS, BLM, BIA, Commerce Department, State Department, that engage with the tourism sector. DOI Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs will also be participating. (05/02/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 20-25, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposed rule and open a 30-day public comment period on the 2018-19 Refuge-Specific Hunting and Sport Fishing Regulations. The proposed rule would open up to 30 various national wildlife refuges to hunting and/or sport fishing for the first time and expand hunting and fishing opportunities at others. Outreach is planned to include a national news release when the *Federal Register* notice is published and notifications to members of Congress in affected districts, with some stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around May 31, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the Colorado butterfly plant due to recovery. This species is located in Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming. This action is not expected to be opposed. Outreach plans include a national news release, and an if-asked FAQs. Key stakeholders include private landowners, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and the BLM. (Updated 04/11/2018)

On or around May 31, FWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) plan to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to revise the regulations pertaining to interagency cooperation pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 402) and the procedures for listing of species and designation of critical habitat pursuant to section 4 of the Act (50 CFR 424). FWS will also propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NMFS' current practice. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. The rules are currently undergoing interagency review through OMB-OIRA. (04/25/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** In late May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to reclassify Kuenzler hedgehog cactus, a plant species endemic to New Mexico, from endangered to threatened. This reclassification is not expected to be controversial. Primary stakeholders include the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service. Planned outreach includes a regional news release, emails to stakeholders, social media, and web postings. (Updated 05/02/18)

***[UPDATE]*** In late May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to delist the Hidden Lake bluecurls, a plant in California, due to recovery. FWS does not expect opposition to the delisting. Primary stakeholders include California Department of Parks and Recreation Mount San Jacinto State Park. Planned outreach will include a national

news release and notifications to stakeholders and members of Congress. A communications plan has been shared with DOI Comms. (Updated 05/02/2018)

[UPDATE] In late May, FWS will send a news release summarizing cross-fostering efforts of Mexican wolf pups to media and stakeholders. Typically FWS will not announce until a successful cross-foster event is completed. Last year, two pups were flown in but the den in the wild could not be located. On April 18, four 10-day old Mexican wolf pups were removed from a captive litter at the Endangered Wolf Center in Eureka, Missouri and flown to Arizona. Two were inserted into a wild wolf pack's den in Arizona, and two were inserted into a wild den in New Mexico. The Interagency Field Team will monitor the recipient packs through the summer to determine the success of these cross-fostering actions. In May, FWS will release another group of pups The Mexican wolf recovery team will only have a very short time (72 - 48 hours) to get a cross-foster mission lined up for execution. Select reporters will be invited to attend the event. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or before June 1, FWS plans to publish in the *Federal Register* the final 2018-19 hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds. FWS annually prescribes frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the number of birds that may be taken and possessed in hunting seasons. These frameworks are necessary to allow state selections of seasons and limits and to allow recreational harvest at levels compatible with population and habitat conditions. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

On or around June 1, the FWS anticipates the draft supplemental environmental impact statement for expanded public access to Rattlesnake Mountain on Hanford Reach National Monument, in Washington state, will be available for public review and comment. This is part of the required regulatory processes to provide public access to Rattlesnake Mountain, consistent with a mandate in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA; P.L. 113-291). Section 3081 of the NDAA states “the Secretary of the Interior shall provide public access to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain for educational, recreational, historical, scientific, cultural, and other purposes, including (1) motor vehicle access; and (2) pedestrian and other non-motorized access.” The FWS established a Tribal Working Group with four local tribes and held public scoping meetings to address cultural concerns and to work through the process of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The FWS is addressing National Environmental Policy Act compliance by drafting a supplement to the 2008 Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Monument. Expanded public access will be controversial with tribes. FWS will continue outreach efforts to the tribes, media, and the public. A local news release is planned to alert the public to comment period. (Updated 03/28/2018)

[UPDATE] On or around June 1, pending approval by the Department, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a Notice of Intent to prepare a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) addressing the potential impacts from four similar wind energy project habitat conservation plans in Hawaii. The HCPs were submitted to the Service in support of requests for permits authorizing the take of endangered or threatened species, under the Endangered Species Act. Due to similarities in the geography, impact, covered species, and proposed mitigation measures between these four wind energy projects the Service has determined that a combined

PEIS is the most efficient and comprehensive approach for considering the cumulative impacts of these actions on the human environment. When the PEIS publishes, outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, with targeted stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On June 1 and 2, representatives from FWS, U.S. Forest Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and other partners will celebrate the proposal to delist Kirtland's warbler. The current Kirtland's warbler population is estimated to be over 2,000 pairs, more than double the recovery goal. The Kirtland's warbler population continues to grow and has exceeded recovery goals for the past 16 years. FWS is accepting comments on the proposal through July 11. (04/25/2018)

*[UPDATE]* On or around June 8, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to list five Sri Lankan tarantula species as endangered. The species are in decline due to ongoing habitat loss, degradation, and the cumulative effects of this and other threat factors. This action is not expected to be controversial. Planned outreach will include web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* an action designating critical habitat for three plant species on Hawaii island and is correcting the maps for existing designations for an additional four species. FWS intends to exclude lands owned or managed by the Queen Liliuokalani Trust, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and other private landowners under 4(b)(2) of the Act. This action is not controversial. Interested stakeholders include the state of Hawaii and multiple state agencies, the county of Hawaii and various private landowners. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders mentioned above. (Updated 04/18/2018)

In response to a petition to delist the species, on or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to reclassify the American burying beetle from an endangered species to a threatened species. While the primary threats to the species have been ameliorated, ongoing threats remain. FWS will also propose a rule under section 4(d) tailoring prohibitions to those most likely to harm the American burying beetle and its habitats. The American burying beetle currently occurs in Arkansas, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Texas. This finding will likely be opposed by the Center for Biological Diversity and Center for American burying beetle conservation. It is also likely to be opposed by the petitioners, American Stewards of Liberty, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Dr. Steven W. Carothers, as they petitioned us to delist, not downlist the species. Outreach plans include a regional news release and Congressional notifications. (04/25/2018)

*[UPDATE]* On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed rule to list the hyacinth macaw as threatened. To address concerns raised by the pet trade industry, FWS is including a 4(d) rule that will allow for the import and export of parrots that meet certain criteria, as well as interstate commerce in this species without a permit. Stakeholders include the bird breeding community, Conservation International, The

Nature Conservancy, and World Wildlife Fund. Planned outreach will include a national news release and web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

As early as June, FWS in partnership with Arizona Game and Fish Department will propose expanding the black-footed ferret 10(j) designation to include all current and historical ferret habitat in Arizona. The 1996 Arizona 10(j) area was limited to the Aubrey Valley Experimental Population Area (AVEPA); successful reintroductions and subsequent population expansions has resulted in ferrets venturing outside of the AVEPA (as fully protected status). FWS consultation with affected tribes has been initiated. FWS will coordinate with AGFD to best approach and inform Arizona grassland residents and industry (livestock) groups. Communication planning will be conducted. (04/18/2018)

### National Park Service

By May 20, National Capital Parks-East, via the Federal Highway Administration, will award a contract to repair the roads in Fort Dupont and Fort Davis Parks. This paving project will completely reconstruct the most deteriorated sections and resurface the roads. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton has been interested in the project. Public notifications will begin in the coming weeks and work is expected to begin in summer 2018. (04/04/18).

On May 21, Mount Rainier National Park will issue a news release announcing the availability of the Paradise Cellular Environmental Assessment (EA) Finding of No Significant Impact. The selected action will issue right-of-way permits to Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile, and provide conditional approval of AT&T's proposal to co-locate wireless communication facilities in the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise. The cellular facilities will be concealed in the attic of the visitor center and will not involve the construction of towers. The NPS received 893 comments on the EA, with approximately 70% opposed to the service. Comments opposed to the proposal emphasized the protection of national parks and wildernesses from wireless signals, with many assuming a cell tower would be constructed. Those in favor emphasized safety, and the benefits of improved communication including convenience, coordination, education, and timely notification of hazards. The NPS determined that cellular service at Paradise will benefit the public by improving communication between the NPS and the public, and between park visitors, in the most intensely used and developed district of the park. (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 22, pending an updated wage determination from Department of Labor (DOL), Golden Gate National Recreation Area's General Agreement and associated draft leases for the long-term use of Pier 31 ½ as the Alcatraz ferry embarkation site will be considered by the San Francisco Port Commission for approval. This item was before the commission on February 27; however, commissioners continued the vote in response to concerns raised by labor unions about the concession contract DOL wage determination and other labor-related issues. Concurrently the NPS is working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Sausalito (with notification to Congressman Jared Huffman's office (D-2-CA)) summarizing common understandings related to the potential expansion of ferry passenger service to Fort Baker described in the Alcatraz Island Passenger Ferry Service Prospectus. [Prospectus link](#) (Updated 5/2/2018)

**[NEW]** May 23 is the final day for internal review comments on the Yuma Crossing Quartermaster Depot Reconnaissance Survey. The NPS has prepared this reconnaissance survey at the request of Senator John McCain to evaluate the Yuma Quartermaster Depot in Yuma, Arizona as a potential unit of the National Park System. The purpose of a reconnaissance survey is to provide a preliminary evaluation of a resource and to recommend whether an authorization for a Special Resource Study fully evaluating the resource should be considered by the U.S. Congress. This reconnaissance survey report discusses national significance and presents preliminary findings on suitability, feasibility, and the need for direct NPS management. Additionally, in response to a special request from Senator McCain, the survey also provides a preliminary analysis of the interpretive approach outlined in a master plan prepared by the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area. (5/2/2018)

On May 23, the public comment period will close on Antietam National Battlefield's Visitor Access and Circulation Plan/Environmental Assessment (Plan/EA). The purpose of the Plan/EA is to evaluate the implementation of strategies to improve visitor access and circulation at the park. This Plan/EA also serves as an amendment to the 1992 Antietam National Battlefield General Management Plan, taking into account newly acquired lands not previously considered in the general management plan and evolving management decisions regarding the visitor center and several Battlefield tour roads. <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ANTICirculationPlan> (Updated 04/25/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 25, public comments for the National Mall and Memorial Parks' renewal of two National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits are due to the EPA. The permit for the World War II Memorial allows for stormwater discharge from the memorial pools and fountains into the Tidal Basin; the permit for the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool allows for the discharge of treated water to and from the Tidal Basin. If no substantive comments are received by the EPA (and none are expected), the permits will go into effect by June 24. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 26, Lassen Volcanic National Park will close its public comment period on alternatives for a Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA). The plan will provide a comprehensive strategy to ensure the preservation and enhancement of wilderness character in the park's designated wilderness and backcountry areas. The proposed action seeks to maintain unconfined recreational use while identifying and preserving resource values that the public seeks in this setting. (Updated 5/2/2018)

**[NEW]** On or after May 28, the Tule Lake Unit of the WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument will open a 30-day public comment period on the Tule Lake Jail Restoration Project Environmental Assessment. The proposed action would fully restore the exterior of the building, remove the freestanding shed and chain-link fence, restore or rehabilitate the jail interior, and would also improve accessibility to and within the building. (05/02/2018)

On May 29, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a competitive business opportunity to establish a waterfront community center at the Fort Baker Historic Boat Shop and Marina as an affordable recreational and gathering place. The purpose of the RFQ is to identify both private- and public-sector entities interested in operating the facility, which is currently operated by the U.S. Air Force as a military recreation facility open to the public. The NPS is seeking a long-term lease that will enable an

offeror to make necessary investments in historic rehabilitation of deteriorating facilities, and the provision of public services and programs at the site. The park has kept the USAF informed throughout the lead up to this announcement, and they have express interest in participating in the RFQ process. (Updated 04/25/18).

On or after May 29, the NPS will release the Tule Lake Unit of World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the public. The FWS co-manages two of three parcels that comprise the Tule Lake Unit, and the FWS has concurred with issuing the FONSI. The selected action outlines the long-term management and development for the unit established in May 2008 by President Bush. (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 30, the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission will hold a kick-off event at Independence National Historical Park. Superintendent Cynthia MacLeod along with Philadelphia Mayor Kenney and Pennsylvania Governor Wolf have been invited to speak at the event. The NPS has received a special use permit application for this event which is going through the approval process. The public and media will be invited. Before the event, the Commissioners will receive a tour of the Liberty Bell Center and Independence Hall. After the event, the Commissioners will hold a public meeting in the Park at the National Constitution Center and then hold an executive meeting. During both meetings, the Commission will begin planning programs and activities commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. The Commission is composed of representatives from various organizations and corporations, as well as eight members of Congress. (Updated 05/02/2018)

By May 30, USDA APHIS will complete data analysis that will inform a schedule for bison transfer to the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Ft. Peck, Montana. On April 5, Yellowstone National Park and the Deputy Administrator of USDA APHIS discussed several key issues related to the park's proposed bison quarantine program. This was follow-up to a February 2018 meeting, convened and facilitated by the Secretary of the Interior, between DOI, NPS, USDA APHIS, Ft. Peck tribal leadership, and the State of Montana. Substantive progress was confirmed on several issues including the structure and signators for agreements on quarantine facility operations, the future transfer of brucellosis-free bison to the Ft. Peck reservation, and USDA APHIS certification of the park bison quarantine facility. Yellowstone bison management and quarantine receive national public interest and media coverage. (Updated 04/18/18)

By May 31, the NPS intends to award multiple concession contracts for mountaineering guide services at Denali National Park and Preserve. Applicant submissions have been scored and rated. The selection process is currently in the matching phase where, one by one, prospective concessioners with ANILCA preferences have an opportunity to match the best offer. New contracts will have a term of 10 years, beginning January 1, 2019. (Updated 03/27/18).

**[UPDATE]** On or before June 1, the Missouri Department of Agriculture will issue its findings relative to the improper use of herbicides by a private contractor to the NPS on NPS lands at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. The over application occurred in the Summer and Fall of 2016 and its effect became evident in the Spring of 2017. Some 170 trees show signs of

mortality and stress. The contractor has been cooperative to date and has indicated willingness to make restitution for damages. The NPS is working to evaluate the best approach to restore resources. (Updated 05/02/2018)

Between June 1-15, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (pending Departmental approval of NOA) expects to issue a Record of Decision for the Vista Grande Drainage Basin Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report /Environmental Impact Statement prepared in cooperation with the City of Daly City, California. This project would allow Daly City to take project actions at Fort Funston to address storm-related flooding in the Vista Grande Drainage Basin. [PEPC link](#) (04/04/18).

On June 2, construction crews will begin temporary stabilization repairs on Arlington Memorial Bridge. The project start was delayed to accommodate the Rolling Thunder special event over Memorial Day weekend. This repair work is designed to keep the bridge open to traffic during its full rehabilitation (beginning in fall 2018). Work crews will repair bridge deck supports in the drawbridge span and the road deck in the westbound roadway. This work will require intermittent single lane closures on the bridge beginning after Memorial Day weekend. (Updated 04/11/18).

On June 14, the U.S. Mint will release the America the Beautiful Quarters Program coin honoring Voyageurs National Park. A ceremony will be held in International Falls, Minnesota. (04/04/18).

On June 15, Yosemite National Park's Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias will reopen to the public, following a 3-year \$40 million project funded through the NPS and Yosemite Conservancy matching funds. A new parking lot and welcome center has been constructed at the South Entrance, a shuttle bus will take visitors to the big trees, a handicap accessible boardwalk has been constructed, trails have been improved, and new restrooms have been installed. The dedication ceremony to mark the completion of the project is slated for June 14. <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/mariposagrove.htm> (03/07/18)

**[NEW] (Close Hold)** On June 18, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park will host King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain for a tour of Mission San Jose. The City of San Antonio Office of International Relations is coordinating the park tour as part of a three-day visit by the royal family to commemorate the Tri-centennial of the founding of San Antonio, Texas, as a Spanish mission in 1718. A public announcement about the visit will be made at a later date. Park employees involved in the planning effort have signed a modified confidentiality agreement (reviewed by our solicitor) with the City of San Antonio to coordinate planning efforts and keep the visit confidential. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 26, the Acadia National Park Draft Transportation Plan and EIS public comment period will close. The comment period is open concurrently with the published EPA Notice of Availability. Public comment will be received through the PEPC website, standard mail, and during Open House events. Press interest in this public comment period is expected to be very high. The communication plan has been shared with NPS Comms. (05/02/2018)



Expected to last through June or the end of the dry season, Burnett Oil Company will continue seismic operation within Big Cypress National Preserve. The Nobles Grade 3D Seismic Survey, a proposal that the National Park Service and Burnett examined and refined for more than two years before it was approved in May 2016, originally began in March of 2017 and suspended operations by June 2, 2017, when conditions became too wet to continue. Burnett is using a vibroseis technique to acquire geologic data to assess the potential for oil drilling within Big Cypress National Preserve. It is expected the exploration will continue this year through the south Florida dry season which should end by June 2018. Work began on March 29. (Updated 04/11/18).

July 3 is the deadline for the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to submit a nomination to the Keeper of the Ch'u'itnu Historic District Traditional Cultural Property nomination submitted by the Native Village of Tyonek (NVT). On April 4, 2018, the Alaska Historical Commission (Commission) approved the nomination submitted by the NVT, a federally recognized tribe that has lived within the proposed district for many generations. The District encompasses ca. 109,000 acres of land within Alaska's Ch'u'tnu River watershed approximately 90 miles west of Anchorage. The nomination is opposed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources as well as some private organizations/commercial entities. An accord can only be submitted to the Keeper by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and only after it has been reviewed by the Alaska Historical Commission. It is the Keeper's understanding that despite approval of the nomination by the Commission, the SHPO remains strongly opposed to it. Failure of the SHPO to meet the 90 day/ July 3 deadline will likely result in the filing of a third appeal by NVT directly to the Keeper to review the nomination and list the property in the NR. (04/18/18)

**[UPDATE]** By July 15, Olympic National Park's 2017 Natural Resource Condition Assessment (NRCA) will be published as a National Park Service Resource Report. This report is jointly funded by the USGS and the NPS NRCA Program. A joint NPS-USGS news release will be issued announcing the report. (Updated 5/2/2018)

Between July 19-31, the American Indian Movement (AIM) will hold its 27th annual Sundance at Pipestone National Monument. The Sundance is the central sacred ceremony for the Lakota Tribes. On April 2, the NPS received a proposal from AIM to improve the grounds used for the Sundance. The NPS began working through the compliance process for the proposed improvements and has introduced possible alternatives to meet AIM's needs. (Updated 04/11/18).

By August 2018, the NPS and the National Park Foundation (NPF) will complete their joint Impact Investment Study. The Impact Investing Study is being funded by the NPF and will analyze how federal agencies have developed third-party financed infrastructure construction, operations, revitalization, and recapitalization programs over the past 20 years. The study will also identify potential new or modified authorities or policies required to implement alternative financing strategies to help the NPS move forward with the construction, repair, and ongoing maintenance of bureau infrastructure. (03/14/18).

**[NEW]** Through September 20, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is undertaking a [paving project](#) that will result in single-lane closures and traffic delays intermittently between the Newfound Gap area south to the park boundary at Cherokee North Carolina. The Federal Highway Administration awarded the \$3 million paving contract to Estes Brothers Construction. Roadwork will include the application of a thin lift pavement overlay. (5/2/2018)

## **Awareness**

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**[NEW]** On April 20, staff from Sand Lake NWR responded to a large waterfowl die-off approximately six miles northeast of Ipswich, South Dakota. Two thousand to 3,000 waterfowl carcasses and sick or injured birds were discovered over an estimated four-square mile area. Most of the affected waterfowl were snow geese, but Canada geese and ducks were also observed. Several birds were collected by South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks and FWS staff, and were sent to the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin for analysis. At this time, the cause of the die-off is unknown. Updates will be provided when lab analyses are completed. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On April 26, FWS issued an internal guidance memo clarifying when landowners should consider applying for a permit under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act. The guidance memo does not change any of the law, regulation, or policy for when a permit may be needed under this section; rather, it clarifies what those standards are so that landowners receive clear and consistent advice from FWS. This memo and an accompanying flow chart are part of an effort to help Ecological Services field offices provide clear, consistent, and accurate advice to landowners. FWS will be distributing this guidance memo to all field offices and posting the flow chart to all web pages where the 10(a)(1)(B) permit applications are found. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On April 12, a reporter from the *Eureka Times-Standard* submitted a second FOIA request for all documents and communications regarding Trinity River Adaptive Management Working Group. An acknowledgement response from the Regional Director was sent on April 23, and the request is being coordinated by FWS's Arcata Fish and Wildlife Office and the Regional Office. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Ash Meadows NWR in southwest Nevada has been subject to litigation by Victor Fuentes, pastor of Ministerio Solida Church Camp since 2012. Fuentes owns a 40-acre private inholding within the boundary of the refuge. On April 20, 2018 a seminar was held focusing on the topic of Nevada water rights. The event was held at Patch of Heaven Church Camp on Ash Meadows NWR. Ryan Bundy, candidate for Nevada governor, other candidates and county officials attended the meeting. Bundy led most of the meeting in which he recommended that the Patch of Heaven take their water back from FWS. However, Fuentes stated he would continue to follow legal means to shame FWS into returning what was rightfully his. The meeting took place without any impacts or disruption to refuge operations. The refuge took, and will continue to take, measures to secure information and protect staff and volunteers. (Updated 05/02/2018)

### **National Park Service**

Media attention and pre-construction activities are ramping-up for the Mountain Valley Pipeline, which will cross the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Several protests are ongoing on private or other non-NPS lands. Specific construction dates are not yet set, but could begin as early as May or June on USFS lands (adjacent to Appalachian National Scenic Trail) and NPS lands (Blue Ridge Parkway). Media attention is not focused on the NPS at this time. The NPS Washington Office of Communications has the lead for any media inquiries. (Updated 4/25/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (PDAS) John Tahsuda will participate in the COOP exercise on May 8, but otherwise will be in the office this week.

Acting Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Director Darryl LaCounte will be in the office this week.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Director Tony Dearman will be working from the BIE Oklahoma City office on May 7, 8 and 9, then head to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan for the grand opening of the Bahweting School and meet with Billy Mills during an event May 10 -12.

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management George Bearpaw will be in the office this week.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

**[NEW]** On Wednesday, May 9, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold a hearing for the nomination of Tara Sweeney to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

**[NEW]** On May 16, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold an oversight hearing on school safety in Indian Country. BIE Director Dearman is a potential witness.

On May 18, PDAS Tahsuda will be the keynote speaker at the Haskell Indian Nations University 2018 commencement in Lawrence, Kansas.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

May 7 is the deadline for written comments on the BIA's request for comments on its categorical exclusions (CATEXs) under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), per the Federal Register notice published on March 6.

#### **Bureau of Indian Education**

May 17 is the deadline for comments and nominations in response to Federal Register notice published on April 17 on the Bureau of Indian Education Standards, Assessments, and Accountability System Negotiated Rulemaking Committee Establishment; Proposed Membership.

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

May 23-24 will be the Tribal-Interior Budget Council (TIBC) meeting at the Washington Plaza Hotel in Washington, DC.

**[UPDATED]** May 31, PDAS Tahsuda will host a Tribal consultation in Rapid City, South Dakota, on potential revisions to the fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR Part 151. A Dear Tribal Leader letter was distributed on May 1.

**[UPDATED]** June 3-6, PDAS Tahsuda is planning on hosting four listening sessions at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri, addressing the DOI reorganization, fee-to-trust regulations, U.S. Department of Education set-aside funding for BIE, and law enforcement issues.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

June 3 is the deadline for issuance of final BIA guidance for Tribes on how to conduct background checks of foster care parents and employees under the Native American Children's Safety Act (NACSA). BIA is currently collecting additional edits from HHS and DOJ and anticipates having the final guidance ready for surname by May 4.

June 30 is the deadline for written comments on whether and how to revise BIA's fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR 151, per the Dear Tribal Leader letter dated February 15, 2018.

#### **Bureau of Indian Education**

May 21 is the deadline for comments on the Bureau of Indian Affairs' proposed rule updating the regulation regarding when Indian students are eligible for benefits of education under the Johnson-O'Malley Act (JOM), per the Federal Register notice published on March 21, 2018. PDAS Tahsuda and BIE Director Dearman consulted with Navajo Nation at their request on April 25.

May 21-25, BIE will host a strategic planning meeting on Goals 4 through 6 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

May 22-23, a SIPI Engineering faculty member will attend a NASA-NSF-NIFA Symposium in Washington, DC.

On May 25, SIPI will conduct focus groups of current students to determine the impact of online and evening/weekend course offerings on student enrollment patterns. This will provide the

basis for a market study to determine the feasibility of future online and evening/weekend college.

May 30-June 2, SIPI's IC-Mars project lead and four students will attend the TECHLAV Annual Meeting in North Carolina University AT&T in Greensboro, North Carolina.

**[NEW]** July 1-7, the Native Youth Community Adaptation and Leadership Congress (NYCALC), an interagency effort of more than eight Federal agencies, will support 100 Tribal students in a program to promote conservation on Tribal lands and workforce development.

**[UPDATED]** The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children originally scheduled for May 16-18 in Choctaw, Mississippi, is being rescheduled to a later date to ensure that sufficient advance notice is provided to Board members and the public.

**[NEW]** Throughout June and July, BIE's Associate Deputy Director for Bureau-Operated Schools will host regional trainings for BIE-funded school staff and Title V staff:

- June 10-15 – Chemawa Indian School, Salem, Oregon
- June 17-22 – Bloomington, Minnesota
- June 24-29 – Cherokee, North Carolina
- July 9-13 – Flandreau, South Dakota
- July 16-20 – Phoenix, Arizona
- July 23-27 – Bismarck, North Dakota

## **Awareness**

### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

**[UPDATED]** DOI Reorganization - Indian Affairs staff expect to have a Dear Tribal Leader letter ready for surname next week to announce Tribal consultations on the DOI Reorganization. The plan is to kick off the consultation series with a listening session at the NCAI meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, the week of June 4.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs marked up and passed out of Committee, S. 2515, the PROGRESS Act, amending Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act for Self Determination and Self Governance to provide Tribes with greater flexibility to efficiently tailor, consolidate and administer federal programs for their communities.

### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

**[NEW]** The week of April 24, 2018, 198 new wildfires have been reported. All but four of these were less than 20 acres. A total of 166 wildfires were less than one acre in size. The largest fire was burning at Fort Apache and San Carlos agencies. The Rattlesnake Fire is approximately 17,900 acres and 25% contained. The road and area closures are in effect. Managers estimate full containment by May 11, 2018.

**[NEW]** On May 3, 2018, the Department's newly established Federal Negotiation Team for the Havasupai Tribe water rights claims held its first meeting with Tribal officials at the Tribal Headquarters at Supai, Arizona located within the Grand Canyon. The team was established after an unsuccessful attempt by the Tribe to obtain a declaration of its water rights in Federal Court. BIA's membership on the Federal Team is handled by BIA Western Region.

**[NEW]** A proposed rule to revise regulations addressing rights-of-way on Indian land (25 CFR 169) to exempt Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments from bonding and security requirements is in surname and is expected to be ready for publication before the end of May.

The Federal Register notice providing the 2018 list of Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Designated Agents List is with Exec Sec and awaiting approval to publish in the Federal Register. ICWA requires State courts and child welfare agencies to provide a notice to Indian tribes whenever an Indian child (as defined in the Act) is involved in a child custody proceeding. The Federal Register notice lists the agents that each Tribe has designated to receive that notice.

**[UPDATED]** Fee-to-Trust Completed Cases: For the time period of April 16 to April 25, 2018, BIA completed five land acquisition cases, taking a total of 4,612.29 acres into trust for four Tribes. To date for calendar year 2018, 103 cases have been completed totaling approximately 7,932.60 acres. Since 2009, a total of approximately 661,908 acres have been conveyed into trust.

Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership (HEARTH) Act - A total of 43 leasing regulations, submitted by 39 tribal nations, have been approved under the HEARTH Act. A total of eight leasing regulations were published in the Federal Register on Mar. 28, 2018. The following is the total of 25 leasing regulations in various stages of review or awaiting approval: 2 tribal leasing regulations submitted to the Federal Register for publication; 4 tribal leasing regulations in various stages of the review and approval process; 1 tribal leasing regulations in final review with DRES; 1 in final review with the region; 14 within the in-house review process and 3 with tribal governments for modifications.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) team won second place in the 2018 NASA Swarmathon, a national competition to develop cooperative robotics to revolutionize space exploration. This is the third year in a row the team has competed and won – bronze in 2016, gold in 2017, and silver in 2018.

### **ASSISTANT SECRETARY INSULAR AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

#### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel (May 6 – May 12, 2018)**

AS Domenech – Will participate in the COOP exercise on May 8.

OIA Director Pula - Will participate in the COOP exercise on May 8.

## Insular Affairs

**Guam War Claims Meeting:** On May 7, OIA Technical Assistance Director and Policy Director will be meeting with the Departments of Treasury and Justice to discuss the process through which Treasury will be withholding funds from Guam's Section 30 money to fund the Guam War Claims Program, which Justice's Foreign Claims Settlement Commission is administering. P.L. 114-328, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017 included the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, authorizing payments of certain claims to the living survivors and heirs of those who died as a result of the occupation, and directing the Secretary of the Treasury to establish a special fund (the "Claims Fund") for the payment of said claims. The Claims Fund, is to be composed of the excess of amounts of duties, taxes, and fees collected under Section 30 after FY 2014 over the amount collected during FY 2014.

**Outer Pacific Meeting:** On May 9, OIA staff will join the members of the Federal Regional Council (FRC) on the quarterly conference call of the Outer Pacific Committee. The FRC is a consortium of 25 federal departments and agencies representing approximately 60 program offices in Region IX. Outer Pacific Committee The Outer Pacific Committee (OPC) focuses on issues related to the three U.S. Flag Territories: American Samoa (AS), Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam and also of the three Freely Associated States: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and Republic of Palau (ROP). Collectively, these territories and states are referred to as the US-affiliated Pacific Island jurisdictions (USAPI). A primary goal for the FRC is to work in a coordinated manner to make federal programs more effective and efficient in Region IX.

**FY2018 Grant Funding Application Review:** Beginning in May, OIA will be reviewing grant applications under the Technical Assistance program for FY2018 funding.

## International Affairs

**Law Enforcement Training in Uganda:** In conjunction with the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement, DOI-ITAP is supporting a law enforcement training course in Uganda May 7-11. Approximately 20 participants from various organizations, including the Uganda Wildlife Force and Natural Resource Conservation Network, will be represented. The training will be geared toward increasing information sharing and developing professional networks, and will include sessions on evidence collection and forensic imaging of telephones and computers. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

**Kenya Wildlife Service USFWS Forensic Lab Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is supporting a technical exchange May 8-11 between the Kenya Wildlife Service and the USFWS Forensic Lab in Ashland, Oregon. This exchange will serve as an opportunity to share lessons learned and promote a train the trainer model to spread the learning to additional counterparts when participants return to their home country. This is the second exchange between these two entities. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

## Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

Nothing significant to report.

### Hurricane Recovery

**FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group:** AS Domenech participated in the bi-weekly RSFLG meeting at FEMA. USVI recovery continues to be hampered by liquidity problems with the Government.

The Department continues to participate in the FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands (USVI) as the lead federal agency on the Natural and Cultural Resources (NCR) Recovery mission. DOI core teams are deployed in Puerto Rico and the USVI to work with Territorial government representatives and local partners on developing recovery priorities and long-term recovery strategies. Additional recreational sites in Puerto Rico were identified and added to the assessment list this week; assessments have been completed at 272 of 366 recreational sites by a DOI team of recreation planners and engineers. National Park Service curators, deployed to Puerto Rico, continued assessing damages to collections in museums, libraries, and archives around the Territory. In collaboration with FEMA, the NCR Recovery team convened a Resilient Ecotourism Industry Stakeholder Kick-off Meeting. Opportunities for alternative forms of tourism were discussed in collaboration with key organizations to begin initial planning of actions to jumpstart the Territory's tourism economy, with a focus on environmental and cultural sustainability. In USVI, National Park Service architects and archaeologists continued to assess damages to historic sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Department's headquarters and Bureau staff are coordinating staffing of damage assessment teams and identifying staff available for longer term deployments to replace core team members, whose deployment periods are ending. Historic architects and structural engineers are being sought through the Environmental Protection Agency's College/Underserved Population Program, to conduct additional assessments of National Register-eligible historic sites in Puerto Rico. The assessment data from all the damaged resources continues to be collected and synthesized to inform Puerto Rico's Recovery Plan by FEMA's May 10 deadline.

### Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)

#### International Affairs

**NAFTA 2.0:** In the aftermath of negotiations held in April, INT Policy Division staff continue to coordinate DOI input into interagency review of negotiating positions, including environmental, water and indigenous issues relevant for DOI, under the direction of the Deputy Secretary and ASIIA. In addition, INT is following up with ASIIA and DAS ASLM regarding the latest negotiations associated with Investor State Dispute Settlement, which are relevant to the oil and gas industry.

**Northern Rangelands Trust Law Enforcement Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is coordinating a technical exchange May 12-June 1 between two law enforcement officers from the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) and Yellowstone National Park. The NRT officers will be joining



National Park staff during the seasonal law enforcement officers training. This exchange will provide field training on interoperability and law enforcement coordination. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

**Combating Wildlife Trafficking Strategic Planning in Kenya:** DOI-ITAP is supporting a two person team -- consisting of a USGS employee and a retiree from the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement -- to travel to Kenya May 12-24 to help develop a mission strategy to combat wildlife trafficking in Kenya as specified in the END Act. The team will hold meetings with representatives from the U.S. Government and Kenyan partners to map counter wildlife trafficking activities being carried out in Kenya. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

#### **Press Releases Planned for the Following:**

- None Planned.

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

##### Insular Affairs

#### **U.S. Interagency Meeting on U.S. National Security Interests in the FAS and Territories:**

On June 8, the State Department and DOI will co-host a U.S.-only interagency dialogue to secure the future U.S. presence in Micronesia to include 1) a session on the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, which builds upon the work of the USG Interagency Working Group on the Freely Associated States and aims to secure U.S. interests beyond 2023; and 2) a session on U.S. territories: Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The dialogue will be held at the SBU/FOUO level.

#### **US Government Continues Discussions with Palau on Compact Funding:**

Following a successful initial meeting in Palau on May 1, 2018 between the United States and Palau representatives, both respective Ambassadors from the United States and Palau are considering a second round of discussions in DC during the week of June 11, 2018.

**White House Visit for the Freely Associated States:** Summer 2018 – The State Department is supportive of a request from the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for a working meeting at the White House for the Presidents of the three freely associated states: Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. This idea was raised by Secretary Zinke to FSM President Peter Christian when he visited Interior in 2017.

##### International Affairs

#### **MOU with Israel on Biodiversity Conservation, Protected Areas, and Cultural and**

**Historical Heritage:** Israel's Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) Director General has further postponed his visit to the U.S., potentially as late as this fall, at which time he hopes to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretary or his designee. INPA is contemplating a visit in the fall and will reach out with details as their planning advances. The MOU is intended

to strengthen cooperation on biodiversity conservation, protected areas, and cultural and historical heritage. Decisions will need to be made about whether to host an event at DOI or at the Israeli Embassy, as well as regarding whether and what type of press or other public announcements should be made in conjunction with the signing. INT expects to share the latest draft of the MOU with DOI senior leadership shortly.

**Event Planning in Indonesia:** DOI-ITAP will implement an event planning workshop for the staff of the the Coral Triangle Initiative Regional Secretariat based in Manado, Indonesia May 17-19. This workshop will be led by two professional event organizers and will be tailored to the specific event-planning needs and challenges faced by the Regional Secretariat. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

### Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

**World Oceans Day and Capitol Hill Ocean Week:** World Oceans Day is June 8 and Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) will be held June 5-7. The Ocean, Great Lakes, and Coastal Program Coordinator, along with the DOI Senior Ocean Policy Team, are coordinating the Department's participation in CHOW, which is hosted annually by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. June has also historically been proclaimed as National Oceans Month, including by President Trump in 2017. Two new issues of the DOI NEWSWAVE newsletter are expected to be released in June for these events.

### Awareness

#### International Affairs

**US-Canada Bilateral Discussion on Transboundary Issues:** DOI (including INT, OEPC, and several bureaus) attended the DOS-led April 26 semi-annual meeting between the U.S. and Canada on transboundary environmental issues. The topic of energy development within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was on the agenda at the request of the Canadians. Canada is keen to protect the Porcupine Caribou herd, and referred to the 1987 agreement in which our governments agreed to consult before taking any policy actions that could adversely affect the migration or breeding grounds of the herd. Canada is pleased that the U.S. has recently appointed two members to the International Porcupine Caribou Board, and is looking forward to having the two remaining members appointed. Canada reiterated concerns among northern communities (including the Gwich'in), territorial governments, the federal government, and other stakeholders about possible energy development within ANWR. Canada plans to submit comments to the recent Federal Register notice.

**Iceland Secretarial Meeting Request and Whaling Activities:** The Embassy of Iceland is seeking a meeting with the Secretary to petition for decertification under the Pelly Amendment, which could lead to changes in their diplomatic status associated with Iceland's whaling activities (DOI certified in 2014 that Iceland was diminishing the effectiveness of CITES due to the conduct of trade in whale meat by Icelandic nationals). INT has put Scheduling in touch with a contact at the Icelandic Embassy, and Scheduling is considering dates in mid-May. INT is

coordinating with FWS, which as the lead for Pelly will provide lead support for the meeting, and is facilitating coordination with the State Department as well.

**Vietnamese Minister Meeting with Secretary and MOU Signing:** The Vietnamese Minister of Public Security Tô Lâm has postponed his trip to Washington, DC until a date to be determined, likely late June or early July. The Vietnamese government has expressed interest in the Minister meeting with the Secretary to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen U.S. – Vietnam cooperation to combat wildlife trafficking. The Ministry of Public Security is the government ministry responsible for managing Vietnam’s police and public security forces, which play a key role in wildlife law enforcement. INT continues to work with FWS Office of Law Enforcement and the State Department to finalize the MOU with Vietnam.

**Assistance to Tribes Seeking Repatriation from Abroad:** The week of April 23, INT Policy Division staff received a request for assistance in repatriating several ancestral remains from the Canterbury Museum in New Zealand, from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Nation. INT engaged with the requestors to clarify their needs, and reached out to the NPS National NAGPRA Program and the State Department (DOS) to initiate a federal response. Meanwhile, another Paris auction of American Indian items was announced for June 21. INT Policy Division staff alerted colleagues within DOI and at DOJ and DOS, and will monitor developments with an eye toward helping tribes stay informed and assisting to recover specific items if requested.

**Interagency US-China Science and Technology Agreement (STA) Discussions:** INT is preparing for expected interagency discussions on the renewal of the U.S. - China STA, which may begin in the next couple of weeks. The discussions will be led by the National Security Council. The interagency will be considering how to move forward with the STA renewal given some U.S. agency concerns about intellectual property rights, and concerns about whether China sees the STA Annex on intellectual property rights as legally binding. USGS has six protocols that fall under the STA umbrella agreement, and FWS has one.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

ASLM Joe Balash will participate in annual training from May 7-8.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kate MacGregor will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Casey Hammond will participate in annual training from May 7-8.

BSEE Director Scott Angelle will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will participate in annual training from May 7-8.

## **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

### **Bureau of Land Management**

**[UPDATED] April 23 – May 15.** BLM-AK prepared a Federal Register Notice providing constructive notice of a decision approving 424.35 acres for conveyance to Sivuqaq, Inc., and Kukulget, Inc., for the Native villages of Gambell and Savoonga on the former St. Lawrence Island Reindeer Reserve. This is a non-discretionary action in accordance with Sec. 19(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), and the native corporations will receive title to the surface and subsurface estates. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. DTS 2040

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The BLM California Desert District anticipates elevating fire restrictions and commencing recreational shooting restrictions on public lands in southern California by early May, depending on weather conditions. (4/20/18)

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Green Plant Exploratory excavation Project Environmental Assessment. Green Planet's Plan of Operation is to excavate and process 400 yd<sup>3</sup> of placer material from a fenced site, approximately 220 feet by 75 feet (total work area), situated on the St. Philips placer claim on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Mohave Ground Squirrel Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (4/20/18)

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates publishing a draft Environmental Assessment for the Keystone Exploratory Drilling Project, located on existing unpatented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The Park Service is a cooperating agency on the joint document. (4/20/18)

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Perdito Exploratory Drilling Project Environmental Assessment. The Perdito Exploration Project is located on existing unpatented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (4/20/18)

**May 7.** BLM-AK. The BLM Alaska Fire Service will host a day-long Fire and Smoke Initiative session during the week-long Joint Polar Satellite System Arctic Summit in Alaska. The Summit is focused on challenges in the Alaska and the Arctic where the system's satellites provide services. The University of Alaska-Fairbanks Geographic Information Network of Alaska is coordinating the summit through the Alaska Fire Science Consortium. The day-long session will discuss available smoke and fire modeling tools and includes a tour of the BLM Alaska Fire Service and the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center. The new generation polar-orbiting operational environmental satellite system is available through a collaboration between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7.** BLM-AK. The EPA published a Notice of Availability (NOA) on the Greater Moose's Tooth 2 (GMT2) Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on March 23 and the BLM published an NOA on March 29 in the Federal Register. Publication opened a 45-day public comment period, which closes on May 7, 2018. The Draft Supplemental EIS analyzes an application for oil and gas development of the GMT2 production pad in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and supplements an earlier analysis of the project in the 2004 Alpine Satellite Development Plan. Under the preferred alternative identified in the Draft Supplemental EIS, the associated pipeline and access road would cross both Kuukpik Corporation-owned lands and federally-managed lands within the NPR-A. The infrastructure would also connect to the Greater Moose's Tooth 1 development, which is eight miles away. Public meetings were held in Anchorage April 16, Fairbanks April 17, and the North Slope communities of Utqiagvik April 9, Atkasuk April 10, and Anaktuvuk Pass April 12. The meeting scheduled in Nuiqsut for April 18 was postponed due to a death in the community. The meeting will be rescheduled for the week of April 30. The Native Village of Nuiqsut has requested a 30-day extension to the public comment period due to the postponement of the meeting. BLM Alaska is reviewing the request and project timelines. (2/28/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office will release an Environmental Assessment of the proposed Buffalo Horn Land Exchange for a 30-day public review period. The preferred alternative would convey the surface estates of 14 parcels of Federal lands totaling approximately 2,815 acres in Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties for one non-Federal parcel in Rio Blanco County totaling 1,835 acres. Most parcels are within the White River Field Office, with one Federal parcel that includes lands in the Little Snake Field Office. The feasibility review found that disposal of the selected Federal lands and acquisition of the non-Federal lands would improve management efficiency of public land resources, provide greater public access to recreation lands, and help protect important wildlife habitat and cultural landscapes. Congressional notification letters were signed April 19. (1/10/18)

**May 7.** BLM-MT/DK. The North Central Montana District is in the process of renewing the grazing permits on 114 grazing allotments in the Bears Paw to Missouri River Breaks planning area. This planning area contains 298,668 acres of public land that is mainly located in the southern portion of Phillips, Blaine and Chouteau Counties in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument (Monument) and the Havre Field Office. Western Watersheds Project recently hired a new public policy consultant and Montana Coordinator. The Acting Monument Manager and members of his staff will take the new coordinator on a field trip of the Monument to provide him with an on-the-ground understanding of the opportunities and challenges the BLM intends to address with these grazing permit renewals while working to develop a better working relationship with the organization. (3/23/18)

**May 7.** BLM-MT/DK. BLM staff will meet with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), American Colloids Company and Wyoben regarding plans of operation and permitting bentonite mining in sage grouse habitat. American Colloids Company and Wyoben are two principle operators for bentonite mining and have submitted Plans of Operations under 43 CFR 3809. Located near the Wyoming border along the western flank of the Pryor Mountains near Warren, Montana, the mines are mapped as Priority Habitat for Sage Grouse. The operators need an approved Plan of Operations from the BLM and an Opencut Permit from Montana DEQ. The meeting will address procedure for issuing both permits. Attending for the

BLM include Nate Arave, Solid Minerals Branch Chief; Dave Lefevre, Billings Field Office Assistant Field Manager; Dorothy Van Oss, Geologist; and Amy Waring, Mitigation Specialist. Caroline Sime will represent the State of Montana Sage Grouse oversight team. (4/20/18)

**May 7.** BLM-WY published the [Notice of Availability](#) (NOA) for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Riley Ridge to Natrona Project on March 23, 2018. Publication of the NOA announced the availability of the Draft EIS and opened a 45-day public comment period that closes on May 7. Denbury Green Pipeline-Riley Ridge, LLC is proposing to construct a 16- and 24- inch carbon dioxide pipeline and associated facilities along a 243-mile linear right-of-way through Fremont, Sublette, Sweetwater and Natrona Counties in central and western Wyoming. The project would create approximately 380 direct jobs and generate \$1.7 million in state and local tax revenue during construction. (2/21/18) DTS 1749

**May 7 – 8.** BLM National Program Lead for National Monuments and National Conservation Areas Timothy Fisher will visit Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the lighthouse designation. The anniversary will feature a Plein (outdoor) Air and Photography event, Learn to Fish family event, and an evening event with partner leaders from the Town of Jupiter, Jupiter Inlet Colony and Palm Beach County Commissioner, and the village of Tequesta. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 7 – 10.** The BLM Resources & Minerals Leadership Committee (RMC) will meet in Washington, D.C. The RMC is comprised of Deputy State Directors for Resources and Minerals from each state, and Division Chiefs from the Washington Office. It is the primary advisory group for policies and practices relevant to resources and minerals managed by the BLM. The meeting will focus on Secretarial Orders and BLM priority topics, and will include a joint meeting with the BLM Field Committee on Tuesday afternoon. Brian Steed and Mike Nedd will meet with the Committee on the first day to deliver Leaders' Intent. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7 – 11.** BLM-NM. The Oklahoma Field Office expects to distribute a news release announcing issuance of a coal lease modification to Georges Colliers, Inc., to expand the active Pollyanna No. 8 coal mine. From March 19 -23, 2018, public notices were posted in three area newspapers, with one more pending, and Dear Reader letters were sent to interested parties; a news release is planned to announce the lease issuance. Colliers submitted the application in April 2015; the Decision Record was signed March 19 and posted to ePlanning on March 20, 2018. The mine is just south of Spiro, Okla., and the lease modification would include 520 acres of additional federal coal reserves at a depth of 1,000 – 1,200 feet, adjacent to the existing mine/lease boundary that would be accessed by underground mining methods using existing infrastructure. The additional acreage contains an estimated 5,616,000 tons of coal and would extend the life of the mine by about 8 years and continue to support 80 existing jobs. The modified lease was signed April 16, 2018, and has been sent to the applicant. Pending return of the lease with the applicant's signature as well as any payments due, the lease will be issued for the 1st day of the following month. (3/16/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7 – June 15.** BLM-AK is issuing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Taku River in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that the Taku River is navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the application, the

decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title to the bed of the navigable waters and to restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 36,160 acres (35 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and the U.S. Forest Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/13/18) DTS 2055

**[UPDATED] May 7 – June 15.** BLM-AK is preparing a *Federal Register* notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Egegik River, Becharof Lake, and Ruth Lake and Outlet in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 290,983 acres of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The [2005 Bristol Bay Area Plan](#) from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources identified some mineral potential in the areas surrounding Egegik River and Becharof Lake. The plan also gives a summary of the region. (4/4/18)

**May 8.** BLM-MT/DK. Representatives from the Crow Tribe, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the BLM Miles City Field Office will meet in Crow Agency, Montana, to discuss the status of fluid mineral projects and future development on the Crow Reservation. The agenda is yet to be solidified. BLM attendees will include Todd Yeager (Acting District Manager), Eric Lepisto (Acting Field Manager), Shane Findlay (Assistant Field Manager, Minerals), and Paul Helland (Petroleum Engineer). Media and public have not been invited. (4/20/18)

**May 8.** BLM-MT/DK. The 30-day comment period begins on an Environmental Assessment that addresses the potential suitability to assign just over 5,816.63 acres of land in Prairie, Custer, and Richland counties to the State of Montana. These parcels were part of a larger list of lands in which the State of Montana expressed interest in a December 2015 application with the BLM. Under the law admitting the State of Montana to the Union, known as the Enabling Act of 1889, the State was entitled to sections 16 and 36 of each township. Many of the lands in these sections had already been entered by homesteaders or set aside for other purposes, such as Indian Reservations or National Forests, and the State could not receive them. Therefore, the State can select public lands under BLM jurisdiction in lieu of the section 16 or 36 lands it did not receive. Medium to low controversy is anticipated. (4/11/18)

**[NEW] May 8 – 10.** The BLM Field Committee will hold a face-to-face meeting in Washington, D.C. to discuss organizational reform, workforce planning, and related issues, and will include a leadership discussion with Brian Steed and Mike Nedd on Tuesday morning as

well as a joint meeting with the BLM Resources & Minerals Leadership Committee on Tuesday afternoon. The Field Committee is comprised of senior field and headquarters leaders who are responsible for daily operations as the BLM carries out its mission. The Committee serves as a senior leadership forum for the operational decision makers to assure uniform implementation of BLM operations and strategic vision; provide insight and advice on sensitive issues for national and state policy; develop, share and exchange best practices to improve operational efficiency; advise and make recommendations to foster mentoring, training, and leadership development; and serve as a nexus between field operations and the Executive Leadership Team. (4/26/18)

**May 8 – 11.** BLM-UT. The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will hold its second cooperating agency meeting/workshop in Kanab, Utah, to develop preliminary alternatives for four Draft Management Plans – the Grand Staircase Unit, the Kaiparowits Unit and the Escalante Canyons Unit of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, as well as public lands that were excluded from the Monument. Draft Management Plans are scheduled for release in July 2018. Invitations to join the planning effort as cooperating agencies were extended to Garfield County Commission, Kane County Commission, Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office (PLPCO), National Park Service (Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Bryce Canyon National Park, and Capitol Reef National Park), and Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians. As of April 17, the following entities have signed an MOU: National Park Service and PLPCO. MOUs with the remaining cooperating agencies are being finalized. The public comment period ended on April 13, and as of April 16, more than 120,000 comments have been received. (4/20/18)

**May 9.** BLM-MT/DK. The Incident Commander Pre-2018 Fire Season Meeting will take place in Miles City, Montana. Agenda items for this coordination meeting will include agency updates by State of South Dakota, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the BLM. Other discussion topics will be aviation updates, dispatch operations, county command and communication issues, Line of Duty incidents, supply requisitions and other issues as they arise. BLM attendees include Miles City Fire/Dispatch staffers Scott McAvoy, Rick Lang, Amy Lancaster, Jeff Essman and Meg Geary. Media and public have not been invited. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 11.** BLM-CO. Several western Colorado field offices are holding kick-off meetings with consulting parties for a Programmatic Agreement focusing on Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act for travel management planning. With several field offices conducting simultaneous travel management efforts, the Programmatic Agreement presents a more efficient way to do Section 106 consultation because many of the consulting parties would be the same for each office. The discussion will include developing a programmatic agreement outlining how each field office would account for impacts to cultural resources during planning, implementation and plan maintenance. More than 140 invitations were sent to consulting parties, which include 28 tribes and tribal organizations, 14 counties, as well as a number of non-profit groups, local governments, and state and federal agencies. The affected field offices are Gunnison, Little Snake, Tres Rios, Uncompahgre and White River. (4/26/18)

**May 11.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with Aurora City Water Resources to discuss permitting and scheduling for a potential new reservoir called the Wild Horse Project. The project is in its initial planning stages. If the City of Aurora moves forward with the project,



it will likely involve rights-of-way for various BLM-managed parcels in Park County. The project is in its initial planning stage. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 11 – June 15.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Fortymile River System in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 2,084 acres (86 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and BLM. The Notice of Application for an RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. (4/26/18)

**In Mid-May.** BLM-ID. Boise District Fire and Aviation expects to sign the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-Grouse Habitat (BOSH) Project. The Final EIS was released for a 30-day public availability period on Feb. 9. The Final EIS, which was developed in cooperation with several state and federal agencies, analyzes the removal of encroaching Western juniper on 726,000 acres of sagebrush steppe habitat in Owyhee County. This juniper treatment project builds on proactive land management policies and practices to conserve the region's remaining sagebrush habitat, which supports significant economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, as well as abundant wildlife, including mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope and golden eagles. The public availability period closed on March 11. The BLM received ten comments, including comments addressing roughly three issues that will be documented in the ROD. The district is currently completing tribal consultation on the Final EIS and estimates signing the ROD in mid-May. (2/21/18)

**[NEW] Mid/Late May.** BLM-ID. A collaborative organization of state wildlife agencies, sportsmen's groups, private landowners, and non-governmental organizations will be publishing a series of short "Partners in the Sage" articles on landscape-level conservation partnerships. One article will include a feature on the Soda Fire rehabilitation with quotes from BLM Boise District Emergency Rehabilitation and Stabilization Supervisor Cindy Fritz and our partners. It is expected to be published in mid-to-late May. (4/26/18)

**[NEW] May 14.** The Annual BLM Law Enforcement Awards Ceremony will take place at 1:30 p.m. at the Main Interior Building. At this ceremony, which takes place during National Police Week, the BLM will honor its Law Enforcement Officers of the Year. BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will attend. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] May 14.** BLM-AK. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will release the Donlin Gold Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on April 27. Current Record of Decision (ROD) timelines include August 2018 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and September 2018 for the BLM, with the BLM Anchorage Field Manager as the anticipated authorized officer. The BLM has submitted the final consistency review of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Section 810 analysis to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is an

appendix to the Final EIS. On April 26, BLM-AK State Office staff met to discuss strategy for the BLM Record of Decision and right-of-way (ROW) grant. BLM-AK fisheries biologist Merlyn Schelske and Donlin Gold EIS project manager Laurie Thorpe are in discussions with Donlin Gold, LLC and the Alaska State Pipeline Coordination Section on specific stream crossing stipulations and other draft stipulations to be included in the mixed-lands jurisdiction natural gas pipeline right-of-way grant. On May 14, BLM-Alaska will participate in the final review of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Programmatic Agreement, which will be an appendix to the Record of Decision. Donlin Gold LLC applied for permits for an open-pit, hardrock gold mine in southwest Alaska. The mine site will also include waste treatment and waste rock facilities, a mill facility and a natural gas-powered power plant. BLM-AK has been participating as a cooperating agency on the project and is responsible for a right-of-way (ROW) authorization. Donlin Gold applied for a ROW on one-third of the 316-mile proposed natural gas pipeline. The ROW would cross approximately 92 miles and 4,322 acres of largely remote and undisturbed BLM-managed lands. The affected public lands are under a 1981 Management Framework Plan and the area is also included in the Bering Sea/Western Interior Resource Management Plan, currently under development.  
<http://www.DonlinGoldEIS.com>. (3/1/18)

**May 14 – June 12.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office (WRFO) will announce a 30-day public comment period on its plan (pending WO approval) to gather wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area (HMA) in northwestern Colorado. The Appropriate Management Level for the HMA is 135-235 wild horses and the current population estimate in the HMA is 544 wild horses. WRFO estimates that there are 374 wild horses living outside the HMA. This includes 305 horses in the adjacent, controversial West Douglas Herd Area. The BLM has never managed West Douglas for a long-term wild horse population because of habitat and terrain, and has not been able to remove all the wild horses from this area. Many activists want to see the BLM maintain a wild horse population in West Douglas. Conversely, ranchers in the area have long argued for the removal of all wild horses in West Douglas. In September 2017, the BLM removed 86 wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas HMA (but not from West Douglas) that were impacting private lands. WRFO is preparing a Determination of NEPA Adequacy for this year's potential gather, tiered to an environmental analysis completed last year. (4/10/18)

**[UPDATED] May 15.** BLM-ID. On May 15, the Bruneau Field Manager will issue two of three proposed grazing decisions, which renew grazing permits, restore riparian areas, protect cultural resources, and incorporate range improvement projects across 187,537 acres of BLM-administered lands. The project area lies entirely within a Priority Habitat Management Area, and contains wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was released on August 30, 2017, for public review, and the Field Manager has been meeting with permittees, state and federal agencies, and other interested publics to address concerns and comments provided in the EA prior to issuing decisions. (2/7/18)

**May 16.** BLM-ES. A meeting will take place at Fort Knox Garrison, Kentucky, between BLM Eastern States, Fort Knox Garrison (Department of Defense), and Louisville Gas & Electric (LG&E). This is the third meeting between the three entities (the first occurring December 7, 2017; the second on February 15, 2018). These regularly scheduled meetings are opportunities for open dialogue between all parties who have an interest in the LG&E Gas Storage Area

located at the Garrison. Five working groups were identified during the February meeting: Energy Resilience (including gas storage and forecast of plans); Security Concerns; Land Acquisition Documents (showing chronology); Environmental Requirements (state and Federal); and Coordinate Range/Training Plans for Troops. The working groups are expected to report out at this meeting. (4/20/18)

**May 16 – 17. BLM-AK.** The Resource Advisory Council will meet in Fairbanks. The agenda will include updates on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, the Greater Moose’s Tooth 2 project, and the proposed Willow Development. There will be updates on current planning efforts, such as the Road to Ambler Mining District Environmental Impact Statement and the Bering Sea-Western Interior and Central Yukon Resource Management Plans. Five of the council’s subcommittees will present their reports on placer mining, recreation, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Council members will receive an overview on Alaska subsistence; Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) including the Northwest Boreal LCC, Western Alaska LCC, and Aleutian Bering Sea Islands LCC; and explore partnership opportunities with local, regional, state, and federal entities. The council will also hear intertribal coalition presentations from the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Kuskokwim Fish Intertribal Commission, and Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission. The Federal Register meeting Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1939

**[NEW] May 16 – June 13.** Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 required Federal land managers to designate “energy corridors” on lands in the eleven contiguous western states. The Sec. 368 corridors are for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines as well as electric transmission and distribution lines. As part of the corridor designation process, Federal agencies were required to complete environmental reviews and incorporate the corridors into existing land use plans. In 2009, several non-profit organizations filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court alleging that in designating the corridors agencies did not comply with the Energy Policy Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and other related laws. The parties negotiated a settlement agreement that directs the agencies to periodically review corridors on a regional basis. These reviews are now moving forward, and stakeholder workshops are scheduled for Region 2 & 3 energy corridor reviews as follows: May 31 in Albuquerque, NM; June 4 in Phoenix, AZ; June 6 in Reno, NV; June 11 in Grand Junction, CO; and June 13 in Richfield, UT. A press release announcing the workshops is being prepared for posting on May 16. (4/26/18)

**May 17. BLM-CA.** Bishop Field Office staff, state and federal natural resource management agencies, and Native American tribes from eastern California and western Nevada will attend the quarterly Bi-State Tribal Natural Resources Committee Meeting in Walker, Mono County, Calif. The committee allows information sharing about resource issues. (4/4/18)

**May 20. BLM-UT.** The comment period for the Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone Environmental Assessment ends. During the comment period, the field office will host a public meeting to provide information and answer questions regarding the proposal. The Cedar City Field Office released the EA for public review and comment on April 20. The EA analyzes the effects of leasing approximately 5,564 acres of public lands for solar energy development in Beaver County, Utah. Sensitive species that may be found in the project area include Kit Fox and Burrowing Owl. Mapped greater sage-grouse habitat is adjacent to the southern and eastern boundaries of the proposed lease areas. According to the Solar PEIS analysis, the solar energy

zone encompasses portions of three perennial grazing allotments (13 percent of the Minersville 4 Allotment; two percent of the Minersville 5 Allotment; and 10 percent of the Minersville 6 Allotment). These allotments are used by nine permittees and support the production of 4,986 AUMs of forage per year. The Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone was designated as part of the 2012 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. (2/21/18)

#### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

On May 8, BOEM expects to publish the List of Restricted Joint Bidders, which is a semi-annual list, in accordance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The *Federal Register* notice is currently with ASLM for surnaming and approval. This list will apply to lease sales held from May 1, 2018, through October 31, 2018. (4/13/18)

By May 8, BOEM expects to publish a Request for Competitive Interest for an area proposed to be used for a right-of-way (ROW) project called Atlantic Link. Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc. filed an application on May 31, 2017 (revised August 22, and September 26), for a ROW grant in support of a proposed project connecting onshore wind and hydro power in Canada to the Massachusetts market via a 350 mile HvDC submarine cable traversing the OCS. Emera, parent company to Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc., has recently expressed an interest in slowing down their project timetable. The notice is in surnaming with ASLM.

**[NEW]** On May 8, BOEM will host a public meeting in West Long Branch, NJ to gather information regarding fisheries usage of the NY Bight. (4/27/18)

On May 9, BOEM will host a New York Bight Task Force Meeting in Newark, NJ. The purpose of the task force meeting is to provide an update on the commercial offshore wind leasing process, present preliminary data analysis that will inform the Area Identification process, and provide the states of New York and New Jersey with an opportunity to update the task force on state initiatives and activities. Invitees to this task force meeting will include the NY and NJ task forces, as well as to up to two elected representatives or designated officials from the Governor's offices of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia to attend and participate. (4/6/18)

The week of May 21, BOEM expects to participate in a tentative meeting with the State of California and DOD regarding offshore wind off the coast of California. (4/6/18)

In May 2018, BOEM and BSEE expect to publish a Notice of Availability for a joint draft Programmatic EA for routine and ongoing oil and gas activities occurring in the Southern California Planning Area. The Final Programmatic EA should be complete by the end of FY 2018. (4/6/18)

#### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

**The Arctic Rule:** The ASLM is currently reviewing documents to plan a path forward for potential revisions to the Arctic Rule.

**[UPDATE] The Proposed Production Safety Systems Final Rule (PSSR) (AA37)** has cleared the Solicitor's office and is caught in a "on again off again" review by OMB. Final decisions are pending however; the confusion at OMB will result in this rule not being able to be submitted to the office of the Federal Register as scheduled on Friday April 27. Once we get further information from OMB on their desire to review, we will provide updates. The Production Safety Systems Revision team worked with Solicitor's Office to develop final edits to the Final Rule. BSEE briefed OMB on the Final Rule on **April 24th**.

**[UPDATE] Consideration of Pilot Program for ACT Program (Accelerating Compliance Together)** - BSEE is currently undertaking a deep dive on data of compliance times with incidents of non-compliance and will be requesting a briefing to the ASLM on this innovative concept to radically accelerate compliance with incidents of non-compliance without costing a single taxpayer penny. A PowerPoint was previously provided for ASLM awareness. A briefing has been rescheduled for **May 9** with ASLM. We look forward to providing the details on this innovative approach.

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

On May 11, 2018, Federal defendants will respond to the Plaintiff's motion for summary judgment in the U.S. District Court of Montana. On June 8, 2017, Wild Earth Guardians and Montana Environmental Information Center submitted a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief claiming that OSMRE failed to adequately analyze the indirect impacts of transportation, failed to adequately analyze greenhouse gases and impacts to the air from coal combustion, failed to consider cumulative actions, and failed to prepare an EIS for the October 2016 mining plan modification decision at the Spring Creek Mine. Petitioners also allege that the mining plan modification approval was unauthorized because the lease was invalid due to an alleged delegation of authority violation. (2/15/2018)

Pending state approval of the permit revision, on or about May 15, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Falkirk Mine's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Falkirk Mining Company's Falkirk Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in McLean County, ND. The mine employs 412 full-time employees and 118 temporary employees and produces approximately 8 – 8.5 million tons of coal per year. (3/15/2018)

On or about May 18, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Bull Mountains Mine No. 1's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Signal Peak Energy's Bull Mountains Mine No. 1 is an underground coal mine located in Musselshell and Yellowstone Counties, MT. The mine employs 260 people and produces approximately 6 – 10 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/15/2018)

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

##### Bureau of Land Management

**May 21 – 22.** BLM-UT will host a Resource Advisory Council meeting in Salt Lake City. Agenda items include BLM updates from the State Director, fire dispatch study implementation, 2018 fire season outlook, updates on planning process Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears National Monuments, Watershed Protection Task Force, Mountain Accord, Washington County

issues, Lake Powell pipeline project, recreation fee proposals, and planning updates. The public comment period will take place on May 22. The Federal Register meeting Notice published on April 2. (3/7/18) DTS 1945

**May 23.** BLM-MT/DK. Indian Outreach Meetings will take place in Mandaree, North Dakota. Representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, BLM, Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), and Office of Special Trustee for American Indians will be available to answer questions by individual Indian Mineral interest owners on mineral ownership, development and royalties. ONRR will mail a meeting notice reminder to individuals living locally and advertise in local media. This is not an event where media or general (non-allottee) public have been invited. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 23.** The Annual Making a Difference National Volunteer Awards ceremony will take place at 1:00 pm Eastern Time in Room 5071 at the Main Interior Building (MIB). Winners have been selected and all states with winners have been informed. An IB formally announcing this year's honorees will be posted in early May. Awardees will travel to their state offices to receive their awards. Each state office hosting a winner will be live-linked through the video teleconferencing system to MIB for the ceremony. Chris McAlear, Assistant Director for National Conservation Lands and Community Partnerships, is tentatively slated to serve as Master of Ceremony. Awards are presented at individual state offices by state leadership in those offices. (3/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 24.** BLM-OR/WA. The Upper Willamette Field Office, Northwest Oregon District, is proposing timber harvest using regeneration harvest and commercial thinning across approximately 1,160 acres within the Harvest Land Base—Moderate Intensity Timber Area land use allocation. The proposed project is located east and south of Cottage Grove, Oregon within the Row River 5th field watershed. This project is being analyzed in the Row River Timber Management Environmental Assessment (EA), expected to be released for public review in May 2018. This EA analyzes harvesting approximately 50,000 MBF (thousand board feet) of timber expected to be sold between fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2023. This project is designed to conform to the Northwestern and Coastal Oregon 2016 ROD/RMP. The BLM expects that timber sale decisions analyzed in this EA will be protested and appealed. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 30.** BLM-ID. The Bruneau Field Manager will issue a decision that designates 1,521 miles of routes as part of a comprehensive travel management plan within the Bruneau Field Office. In 2009, the Owyhee Public Lands Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The Canyonlands East Travel Management Plan is the first of five travel management plans that are underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. Local, state, and federal agencies and NGOs are generally supportive of it. The one exception is motorcycle groups. It is unknown whether they will appeal. (2/7/18)

**[UPDATED] May 30.** BLM-ID. The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) Manager will be issuing a travel management plan decision for the southern portion of the NCA. In 2009, the Owyhee Public Lands Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management plans on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The NCA South Travel Management Plan is the second of five travel management plans that are

underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. According to the Boise District Office, counties are generally okay with it. However, Idaho Parks & Recreation (state) and some motorized groups may appeal it. (2/7/18)

**[NEW] May 30.** BLM-NM is proposing to hold a public event to celebrate the recent donation of lands to the BLM that allowed for public access into the Sabinoso Wilderness. The event, tentatively scheduled for May 30 (pending approval), would include a small ceremony and organized hikes for VIPs and the public in the Wilderness. Invitees would include Secretary Zinke, Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Congressman Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Wilderness Land Trust President Brad Borst, and BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed. (4/26/18)

**May 31.** BLM-CO. The Southwest District has prepared a Notice of Proposed Meeting for the Southwest Resource Advisory Council. Pending publication in the Federal Register, the meeting will be held in Fruita. Planned agenda items include training members on their participation on the Recreation Resource Advisory Council, recreation fee proposals, the close-out of the Dominguez-Escalante Advisory Council and forming a subcommittee dedicated to partnership-based trail building in the Grand Junction area. The Federal Register Notice package is currently being routed in the WO. The Southwest District is planning on a May 1, 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/4/18) DTS 2068

**In May.** A report to Congress on efforts to conserve Greater Sage-Grouse, restore sagebrush habitat, and implement a native seed strategy was due July 4, 2017, per direction from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017. The report has been prepared in final draft, but submission to ASLM has been delayed pending determination of the degree to which grants and agreements will be utilized going forward to achieve the purposes of the native seed strategy. (4/4/18) DTS 11379

**In May.** SO 3359 implements Executive Order 13817, which aims to reduce the vulnerability to disruption of critical mineral supply among other stated goals. The Order requires BLM to submit to the Secretary, within 60-days, a report with a list of recommendations to: 1) improve access to lands to explore for and develop critical minerals; 2) streamline permitting and review processes related to critical minerals development; and 3) otherwise increase critical mineral discovery, production, and domestic refining. The BLM has drafted a report with 13 recommendations across these categories that is under review in Washington. (3/30/18)

**In May.** At the request of the Department, the BLM prepared for the Office of Management and Budget a report on hardrock mineral royalties regimes in the United States. The report discusses options for a Federal royalty on hardrock minerals, litigation risks, legislative history, and provides additional background information. The report is under review in the BLM Washington Office. (3/30/18)

**In May.** BLM-AK will submit a Federal Register Notice for revocation of five Public Land Orders (PLOs), which will open approximately 229,632 acres in the Goodnews Bay region for surface entry, mineral exploration and mining; it will also make the state selections effective, and allow the BLM to move forward in conveying lands to the State under their Statehood entitlement. The PLOs were issued in 1972, pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement

Act Sec. 17(d)(1), and were recommended for revocation in the 2008 Bay Resource Management Plan. The Notice is under review at the BLM Alaska State Office. (3/1/18)

**[NEW] In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona State Office has received five Expressions of Interest (EOI) for oil and gas leasing between October 2017 and January 2018. The EOI's total 6,761 acres and are located in Apache and Navajo counties. The adjudication has been completed, and three parcels have been created and forwarded to the Safford Field Office for National Environmental Policy Act analysis. (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office has been requested to transfer 3,380.69 acres (surface and subsurface) to the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) through a noncompetitive direct sale for the appraised fair market value. The subject parcels are located on the western and southern margins of the Gila River Indian Reservation in Maricopa and Pinal Counties in Arizona, south of the Phoenix metro area. These lands are isolated from other BLM lands in the area and were identified as suitable for disposal in the BLM's Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. The GRIC is very interested in acquiring these lands because of their adjacency to its reservation and the presence of cultural resources significant to them present on these lands. The non-competitive direct sale is being pursued at the request of the GRIC, which was formally submitted in 2015. The BLM Arizona Land Tenure Steering Committee recommended pursuing this action in May 2015; this recommendation was approved by the Arizona State Director. The BLM has completed an appraisal to determine fair market value of the parcel (\$9,620,000) and is in the process of notifying other potential interested and qualified parties about the sale. (4/4/18) DTS 1804

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona Strip Field Office is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), in order for the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline project to proceed. The analysis in the RMP amendment will subsequently be incorporated into an associated environmental impact statement (EIS) for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project being completed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The FERC is the lead agency to complete the EIS for the Pipeline Project; the BLM is a cooperating agency. The Utah Division of Water Resources is the Project proponent. Although only a small portion (900 acres) of the management area is affected, the BLM must complete the RMP amendment to address inconsistencies between the decisions in the current RMP, the proposed route for the Pipeline, and an existing utility corridor designated. Approximately 1.5 miles of the proposed Pipeline would run through the Kanab Creek ACEC. This information will be incorporated into the FERC's EIS for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. (4/4/18) DTS 1860

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office will move forward with release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement related to development of the proposed Sonoran Valley Parkway Project (SVPP) by the City of Goodyear in Maricopa County, Arizona. This project provides the opportunity to create immediate and future jobs, help bolster the growing local economy, and reduce emergency service response times. The City has approximately 77,000 residents and is part of the Phoenix-metropolitan area, which has approximately 4.5 million residents. The SVPP will provide needed enhancements to infrastructure as the area is projected to experience significant growth. The proposed project



would involve approximately 475 acres of BLM-managed public lands. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 1775

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-AZ. BLM Arizona will publish its Record of Decision (ROD) for Recreational Target Shooting in the Sonoran Desert National Monument. A March 2015 federal court order required the BLM to re-analyze impacts of recreational target shooting on the monument. The ROD, which was developed after extensive public outreach and analysis, preserves access for target shooting on nearly 90% of the monument, while ensuring public safety in the area of heaviest family recreation use—the Juan Bautista de Anza Recreation Management Zone (RMZ). The ROD was filed with U.S. District Court in Phoenix on March 5, 2018, and the announcement will coincide with publication of the Notice of the Availability in the Federal Register. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1976

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CA is preparing an Environmental Assessment and Resource Management Plan Amendment for a proposed transmission and water pipeline right-of-way (ROW) associated with the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Project in Riverside County. In 2014, the Eagle Crest Energy Company obtained a 50-year license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to construct, operate, and maintain the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project. The BLM is processing a ROW application associated with the 1,300-megawatt hydroelectric project that includes a 500-kV transmission line and a 12-inch water pipeline energy transmission. The project is estimated to create 4,300 jobs during construction and will contribute to the state's energy portfolio. The City of Palm Springs and Cathedral City, environmental groups, and Colorado River Indian Tribes have voiced concern over the project, including its proximity to Joshua Tree National Park, impacts to critical or endangered desert species, and potential impacts to water, and cultural and historic resources. The project is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18)

**In May.** BLM-CA anticipates approval to publish a draft Notice of Availability of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Land Use Plan Amendment for the revised technology of the approximately 4,200-acre Palen Solar Photovoltaic Project, a 6.7-mile generation intertie transmission line connecting the project to the SCE Red Bluff Substation. The Final Supplemental EIS analyzes the consequences of granting a right-of-way to construct, operate and maintain a 500-megawatt solar photovoltaic facility near Desert Center, Riverside County. The project would create approximately 1,145 peak construction jobs and up to 12 full-time operational jobs. The project is controversial as it has attracted media attention and environmental groups have expressed concerns about the impacts to surface hydrology, groundwater, biological resources, visual resources, and air quality. Congressional interest includes Sen. Harris (D-CA), Sen. Feinstein (D-CA), and Rep. Ruiz (D-CA-36). State interest includes Gov. Jerry Brown and staff. Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1968

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of four parcels totaling 6.72 acres to the City of Black Hawk in Gilpin County. The adjacent, surrounding lands are primarily owned by the city and they intend to use the parcels for infrastructure, recreation and open space. The parcels are currently segregated from the 1872 Mining Law. The segregation will expire May 5. The proposal is not considered controversial. The potential for controversy would increase if the

segregation period expires due to the possibility of nuisance claims being filed on the parcels, which would interfere with the city's plan. RGFO is planning for a spring 2018 (before the segregation expiration, pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. Revisions to the NORA and the DOI briefing paper, as well as parcel maps were sent to Acting Senior Policy Advisor Kevin Oliver on April 11. (2/7/18)

**[NEW] In May.** BLM-CO. The Uncompahgre Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its preliminary environmental assessment for Gunnison Energy's North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan near Paonia. The proposal includes developing 35 Federal oil and gas wells on five well pads, new or upgraded access roads, and new gas and water gathering lines on Federal and private lands. The project would produce approximately 700 billion cubic feet of natural gas over 30 years. (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office is planning to issue a decision on a proposal to expand the Fourmile Trail System outside of Buena Vista. Community-led meetings were held from December 2016 through February 2017 to develop the proposal, which includes ten miles of new motorized and non-motorized trails totaling approximately 18 miles. Concerns from ranchers, wildlife managers and private property owners were considered when the proposal was developed. Since 2002, the Fourmile Trail System had had several routes constructed, along with a series of trail improvement projects. (4/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Rocky Mountain District and Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with representatives from Senator Gardner's staff to discuss recreational mineral collection in the Cache Creek Placer Area. BLM acquired Cache Creek – a 2,160-acre parcel – in 2000 through the Land and Water Conservation program. The Cache Creek Placer Area Management Plan, approved February 2016, requires individuals to obtain a Special Recreation Permit to collect minerals recreationally in Cache Creek with stipulations defining allowed uses and locations, as well as prohibited acts to prevent resource damage. While mineral deposits exist on the property, and there is interest in claim staking in the area, the parcel is not open to the General Mining Law of 1872 since it was acquired post-FLPMA. The meeting date was originally scheduled for March 26 and postponed due to scheduling conflicts. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. BLM Colorado is preparing a Notice of Proposed Reinstatement for Contex Energy's terminated oil and gas lease (COC77678). The lease is located in Archuleta and La Plata counties, totaling approximately 1,920 acres. The lease was terminated on June 1, 2017 because Contex Energy failed to pay rental fees on time. If approved, the lease would be reinstated with an increased royalty rate and rental fee. BLM Colorado is planning for a May 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its proposal to use bait and/or water trapping as the preferred method for future removal of wild horses from the Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area. The proposal includes continuing to treat mares with fertility control to slow population growth. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 35 and 65 animals. The BLM estimates the Spring Creek Basin herd is at the high AML for the HMA. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-ES is working with the U.S. Coast Guard on a withdrawal revocation package for Lot 22 of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA), Florida. The BLM is the primary administrator of the 120-acre ONA, engaging in shared stewardship of the site in collaboration with local partners. The U.S. Coast Guard submitted a Notice of Intent to Relinquish Lot 22 (16.41 acres) to the BLM in June 2017. Lot 22 includes the lighthouse, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and receives more than 75,000 visitors annually. The BLM is currently in the suitability determination phase of the relinquishment, which includes an environmental assessment, preparation of a suitability report, completion of a NEPA compliance document, and publication of a Notice in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM MT/DK. The Butte Field Office is conducting prescribed burns as part of the vegetation restoration project in the Iron Mask Planning Area of Broadwater County, Mont. This effort continues despite a recent story in the Helena Independent Record that Native Ecosystem Council (NEC) and Alliance for the Wild Rockies (AWR) have filed a Complaint for Injunctive Relief in U.S. District Court seeking to halt the project. The BLM has been formally served with the complaint. The Butte Field Office is working with the DOI Solicitor's Office and Department of Justice to prepare a response. Both NEC and AWR filed administrative protests and appeals with OHA and IBLA on these same actions, but did not prevail in that review process. (3/30/18)

**In May.** BLM-MT/DK. The Lewistown Field Office is preparing a Notice of Realty Action for Federal Register publication announcing the BLM's classification of 80 acres at Bynum Reservoir in Teton County, Mont., as suitable for conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The Federal Register Notice will also inform the public that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has applied to have the land conveyed from the BLM to MFWP. MFWP has maintained a fishing and recreation access site on Bynum Reservoir for over 20 years with a right-of-way from the BLM. The BLM Lewistown Field Office will convey the 80 acres to MFWP under the condition that the State will never sell the land or change its current recreational use; otherwise the land will return to the BLM. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-NV expects to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with mineral segregation for the proposed Yellow Pine Solar Project in Clark County. The proposed project includes 9,290 acres of BLM-managed public lands 32 miles west of Las Vegas and 10 miles southeast of Pahrump, Nev. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1722

**In May.** BLM-NV. The Ely District will release the Final EIS for the Gold Rock Mine Project. The BLM will not issue a final decision on the proposed project for a minimum of 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The proposed project would add 300 direct jobs during construction and 150 to 250 direct jobs during peak mining operations. The project is located 50 west of Ely and 30 miles southeast of Eureka in rural White Pine County, Nevada. White Pine County and Eureka County are supportive of the project and the local rural economic development it will bring. Local livestock grazing permittees have expressed concern about the loss of forage within the fenced mine area, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife has expressed concerns about the project in regard to impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse and crucial mule deer winter habitat. The mining company has

included voluntary mitigation to reduce these impacts. The Notice is under review in Washington. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-NM. The Carlsbad Field Office expects to publish the Notice of Availability (NOA) for its Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, outlining the BLM's long-term "landscape-level" plans and goals for public lands in Lea, Chaves, and Eddy Counties. The planning area includes approximately 2.1 million acres of Federal surface land and 3 million acres of BLM-managed mineral estate in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties. The NOA is under review in Washington D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 2012

**In May.** BLM-OR/WA. The OR/WA State Office will be requesting a signature of concurrence from the Principal Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management, and Budget for the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Selected Remedy of Operable Unit 1 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) cleanup of the Formosa Mine. The BLM is a co-lead with the Environmental Protection Agency for the Formosa Mine CERCLA cleanup, and are working together under a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed in March 2018. The Formosa Mine is located near Roseburg, OR. The remedial action of consolidating and capping mine materials will protect human health and the environment by eliminating or reducing exposure of mine materials to water and oxygen through containment, thus mitigating the migration of contaminants (cadmium, copper, and zinc) affecting surface waters at the site. It will also preventing human exposure to soil contaminated primarily with arsenic in localized areas at the site. The Concurrence Memorandum will be circulated for surname by the BLM Director and transmitted to the DOI Office of Environmental Policy & Compliance for further routing. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT is considering the non-competitive, direct sale to PacifiCorp of 200 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to PacifiCorp non-competitively due to the lack of public access and their ownership of the surrounding lands, pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-3(a)(4). Conveyance of the identified public lands would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT is considering the modified competitive sale of 160 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value to the adjacent landowners Hunter Prep Plant LLC, Ross Huntington, and Clinton Price. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to the adjoining land owners on a modified competitive basis, with Hunter Prep Plant, LLC as the designated bidder, giving them the right to meet the highest bid pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-2(a)(1). Conveyance of the identified public land would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office intends to issue a decision authorizing a Special Recreation Permit to Pinnacle Helicopters LLC for a shuttle service for river clients from the Canyonlands Field Airport to Mineral Bottom Airstrip. The proposal has been controversial due to potential impacts to other visitors' experiences, and an unrelated proposal from the same company to also conduct helicopter shuttles in Blue John Canyon, immediately south of

Canyonlands National Park and near the Horseshoe Canyon Wilderness Study Area managed by the BLM Richfield Field Office. That request garnered regional media attention. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT expects to approve a Final Environmental Impact Statement for Alton Coal, which seeks to expand its existing mine by leasing federal coal on 3,581 acres of public and private lands near Alton, Utah. The Alton Coal Tract contains 59.6 million tons of bituminous coal, and the proposed action could extend mining operations by 25 years. The lease sale needs to occur by summer 2018 for continuous operations. (2/21/18) DTS 2032

**In May.** BLM-UT. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Notice of Intended Disposition will be published in four newspapers in the Four Corners region for two weeks. Publication will communicate BLM-Utah's intention to repatriate to the Hopi Tribe human remains and 4,121 associated funerary objects that were illegally excavated and/or disturbed in 2008 from Site 42SA9266 on BLM-administered lands in San Juan County, Utah. This notice is under review in Washington. (3/23/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT. The Utah State Director will transmit a Federal Register notice to WO-240 regarding a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) effort. This notice will correct a previous notice published in 2004 to update the minimum number of individuals from two archaeological sites in southwestern Utah based on updated osteological analysis. Publishing the notice in the Federal Register will be one of the final steps in the NAGPRA process to repatriate the remains of 12 individuals and thousands of associated funerary objects to Hopi Tribe. In accordance with the results of the tribal consultations, all of the human remains and funerary objects will be reburied on BLM-managed lands administered by the Kanab Field Office in Kane County, Utah. (3/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office will issue an EA for a 30-day public comment period. The EA analyzes a proposal from Grand County to create a small detention basin on public lands as part of a flood control project near the south end of Moab, Utah. Past flooding has affected local neighborhoods and U.S. Route 191 in this area. The construction of the basin will entail a minor reroute of an existing mountain bike connector trail. (4/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT expects to publish an NOA for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Enefit American Oil Utility Corridor Project in northeastern Uintah County. Publication of the NOA initiates a 45-day public waiting period pursuant to NEPA requirements of NEPA. The Final EIS analyzes Enefit American Oil's proposal to construct five utility ROWs along 40 miles south of Vernal, Utah. The notice is pending approval in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1817

**In May.** BLM-WY expects to publish the Notice of Availability for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Normally Pressured Lance (NPL) Project. The Final EIS is currently under review by Washington and BLM-WY needs approval of the NEPA before advancing the Federal Register package in compliance with WO IM-2018-028. The proposed project includes drilling up to 3,500 directional natural gas wells over a 10-year period on approximately 140,000 acres. The NPL project is projected to yield between 3.5 to 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and between 17.5 to 140 million barrels of oil over the estimated 40-year life of the project. Project revenues are estimated at \$17.8 billion with federal royalties

amounting to about \$2.2 billion, of which about \$1.1 billion would go to the State of Wyoming. The project would also bring about 954 full time jobs to the region during development. (2/21/18)

**[UPDATED] Late May.** BLM-ID. The Boise District is completing an environmental analysis to authorize the use of 18 herbicide active ingredients as authorized by the BLM in the 2016 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Aminopyralid, Fluroxypyr, and Rimsulfuron on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and the 2007 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The forthcoming decision will determine how noxious weeds and invasive plants will be managed on public lands within the Boise District. The Decision is expected to be signed in mid to late May, pending completion of Section 7 consultation. (3/20/18)

**Late May.** BLM-MT/DK. A March 23, 2018, order by the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana identified National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) deficiencies in the Miles City Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the Buffalo (Wyoming) RMP. The court directed the BLM and plaintiffs to attempt to reach an agreement no later than May 23, 2018, and to prepare an expedited schedule for preparation of a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for both RMPs. Due to the court-identified NEPA deficiencies, the BLM anticipates postponing the scheduled June 12, 2018, oil and gas lease sale for 217 nominated oil and gas lease parcels within the Miles City Field Office. The BLM expects to make a final decision on the postponement and make the decision public by the end of May. (3/30/18)

**Late May.** BLM-WY. The Buffalo Field Office will release the I-90 Corridor Travel Management Draft Environmental Assessment. The release of the Draft EA will initiate a public scoping period that will end in June or July. Two public meetings will also be held during this period, the dates of which have not yet been determined. On March 8, the BLM began issuing letters to affected landowners and grazing lessees, informing them of the BLM's desire to obtain easements and/or exchanges, which will assist the BLM in designating travel routes to provide easier public access to BLM lands for recreational opportunities. In the effort to be a good neighbor, the Field Office is respecting the demanding schedules of working ranches as it continues to work with them to determine their access needs and their interest in facilitating enhanced public access. The BLM has briefed county commissioners and congressional representatives in routine meetings. The goal of these letters is to open dialogue regarding potential easements/exchanges and come to mutually beneficial agreements with affected landowners. (3/1/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action for a direct sale of 7.55 acres to resolve a longstanding trespass issue. Anderson Summer Camp purchased property and associated buildings in Eagle County in 1979. In 2014, the camp discovered that some of their base and other buildings are located on BLM lands. They notified the BLM when they discovered this. The CRVFO is planning for a spring 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. (4/11/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will release a Draft Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Colorado River between Parshall and State Bridge for a 30-day public review period. The RAMP addresses alternatives to better manage increasing use in this area, which sees more than 90,000 float-boaters and anglers each season. Alternatives include adding unlimited day-use permits, expanding a developed campground and designating river campsites. (3/16/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Little Snake Field Office and Northwest District plan to announce a public scoping period in late April or early May for a summer bait-trap wild horse gather in the Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area (HMA). The proposed gather is under review in Washington, D.C. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 163 and 362 wild horses. The BLM estimates the population in the HMA exceeds 700 horses. The Field Office and district have been working closely with a local partner group—the Sand Wash Advocacy Team—to treat mares with fertility control to slow the population growth. (3/16/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office has prepared a Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement evaluating an exchange of certain Federal Lands for properties owned by Galloway, Inc., owners of the Blue Valley Ranch. Under the proposal, the BLM would convey approximately 1,489 acres of public land in Grand County to Blue Valley Ranch in exchange for 1,830 acres of privately held land in Summit and Grand counties. If approved the exchange would allow the BLM to improve public access, facilitate recreation and increase big-game winter range in the area. The field office is planning to publish in the Federal Register in spring 2018. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1955

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of 0.16 acres in Garfield County to adjacent landowners who inadvertently built part of their home on BLM-managed land. The CRVFO is planning for a spring 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is part of an IBLA case settlement to resolve this long-standing trespass issue. As part of the settlement, the landowners agreed to two easements across their private land to access BLM lands with no previous legal access. (3/7/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office will begin initiating the management plan for two parcels acquired in March 2017 through the Sutey Ranch Land Exchange after a Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. The Colorado River Valley Field Office is planning for a spring 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval). The planning effort will result in an amendment to the approved Colorado River Valley Resource Management Plan. The 557-acre Sutey Ranch parcel includes high wildlife value and high potential for recreation. The 112-acre Haines parcel is popular with mountain bikers in particular. There is significant community interest in this planning effort. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1999

**Early June.** BLM-ID. BLM Four Rivers Field Office is coordinating with Ada County regarding a county ordinance to eliminate overnight camping within an area of the county that includes BLM-managed lands in the Boise Foothills, within the Ridge to Rivers trail system north of Boise. This area has been getting more use in recent years by people setting up impromptu camps and/or squatting in trailhead parking lots and day-use areas. This county

ordinance would reduce conflicts with trail users, and Ada County expects that this will be in effect by June 2018. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] June 1.** BLM-ID. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have requested and funded an investigation into the 1873 boundary survey of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Specifically, the Tribes assert the easterly boundary of the reservation should have been 30 miles further east, resulting in a shortage of approximately 600,000 acres. The Cadastral Survey investigation has affirmed the 1873 locations of the boundaries, with only minor differences of interpretation of the controlling natural features. Finalization of the report is anticipated June 1, 2018. However, it is unlikely that the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will drop their claim for many reasons: First, all metes-and-bounds descriptions are subject to differing interpretations. Second, their claims have been refuted in the past and their pursuit of compensation has persisted. Third, the report will indicate several interpretations of the written description, with the final finding being that the 1873 surveyor applied one interpretation to the conditions on-the-ground, and that interpretation was acceptable to the Surveyor General. The appropriate time to raise a claim pertaining to boundary disputes is when the "error" is first discovered. (4/26/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-ES proposes transfer by Quiet Title Deed of a former railroad right-of-way (ROW) to the Village of Forsyth, Macon County, Illinois. The transfer was requested by the Village of Forsyth for use as a recreational trail, under the authority of 16 U.S.C. 1248 (National Trails System Act). The ROW is 200 feet wide and totals approximately 18 acres. This action has been reviewed extensively by the Pittsburgh Field Solicitor's Office and the Washington, D.C. Solicitor's Office. The transfer is supported by Illinois Congressman Rodney Davis (R-13th). (4/20/18)

**[NEW] June 4 – 8.** BLM-WY will submit an updated Public Land Order (PLO) for the withdrawal of the Johnny Behind the Rocks (JBR) Recreation Zone near Lander. The proposed PLO would withdraw and close the subject lands to location and entry under the United States Mining Laws, but not from leasing under the mineral or geothermal leasing laws, for a period of 20 years. The JBR Recreation Zone was designated in the 2014 Lander Resource Management Plan to encourage non-motorized recreationists to engage in horseback riding, hiking, trail running, wildlife viewing and mountain biking. The BLM has invested in developing a trails system, parking lot and trail information kiosk with the local Lander Cycling, United States Department Agriculture, Forest Service, Wind River Backcountry Horsemen, Wyoming Conservation Corps, Encana Corporation and the Fremont County Recreation Board. The current trails attract regular usage by local and national recreationists. The temporary segregation created by the proposed application published in the Federal Register on June 10, 2016 (81 FR 37634) will expire on June 9, 2018. The PLO needs to be published by this date. (4/26/18)

**[NEW] June 7.** BLM-CO will hold its quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The BLM is offering 64 parcels totaling approximately 58,694 acres in Jackson, Moffat, Rio Blanco and Routt counties. Approximately 30,898 acres are on Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, which could generate controversy. Oil and gas leasing and development in Colorado generated an estimated \$2.9 billion in economic output in fiscal year 2016. (4/24/18)



**[NEW] June 12.** BLM-UT will hold a quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The Color Country District posted the Notice of Competitive Lease Sale on April 26, 2018. The public protest period will end on May 7, 2018. The district proposes to lease four parcels totaling approximately 3,788 acres in Wayne, Sevier and Beaver counties, Utah. The June lease sale also includes eight parcels in the Vernal Field Office that were sold during the December 2017 oil and gas lease sale but for which timely payment was not made by the successful bidder. As outlined under 43 CF3 3120.5-3C, the BLM must consider re-offering the parcels at the next feasible lease sale. The Vernal Field Office completed a Determination of NEPA Adequacy based on the EA prepared for the December 2017 lease sale and the BLM is re-offering the eight parcels. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] June 14.** BLM-CA. The 90-day public comment period will end for the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft Land Use Plan Amendment for the West Mojave Route Network Project. The Draft Supplemental EIS addresses proposed solutions for adaptive and responsible travel management planning and recreational use — including off-highway vehicle access — within the West Mojave planning area, while protecting important resources. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] June 19.** BLM-AK. On April 20, BLM-Alaska published a technical correction adding a website for commenting on the Notice of Intent (NOI) (published April 20) initiating public scoping on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOI began a 60-day comment period that closes June 19. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis that is required before a lease sale can be held. An award was made to eMPSi, a third-party contractor, on April 18 to support EIS development. Public scoping meetings are tentatively scheduled for May 21-23 in Arctic Village, Kaktovik and Utqiagvik and May 29 & 30 for Fairbanks and Anchorage. (3/16/18) DTS 1996

**[UPDATED] June 20.** BLM-NV. The Secretary of the Interior is scheduled to sign the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 17 projects for funding. There are two Nevada signing event options: 1) Southern Nevada at Bureau of Reclamation for their Round 17 Capital Improvement Program (more than \$10 million at the dam); or 2) Northern Nevada at BLM-NV land acquisition (\$4.5 million - providing new recreation opportunity) and nearby fuels projects (\$5 million). The Executive Committee for SNPLMA requested the Secretary of the Interior approve \$78,002,276 of funding, including \$5 million for a Special Account Reserve and an additional \$3.2 million for SNPLMA Round 16B Craig Ranch Regional Park—a 20.57-acre acquisition project. SNPLMA funding advances the Secretary's priorities by creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt; sustainably developing our energy and natural resources; restoring trust and being a good neighbor; protecting our people; striking a regulatory balance; modernizing our infrastructure; achieving our goals; and leading our team forward. (3/23/18)

**[UPDATED] June 21.** BLM-ES will hold a competitive online oil and gas lease sale of 24 parcels, all of which are split estate with private surface. The combined parcels total 2,202.87 acres and are located in Cleburne and Van Buren Counties, Arkansas. The sale noticed was

published on April 10, beginning a 10-day protest period that ended April 20. No protests have yet been received. (4/11/18)

**June 27 – 28.** BLM-NV. The Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (MOSO RAC) proposes to meet in Caliente, NV. Agenda items include updates on the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area recreation fee business plan, utility and transmission corridors planning updates, wildlife management and a tour of the Lincoln County Trail System. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] June 30.** BLM-CA. Bakersfield Field Office staff will participate in a U.S. Forest Service-led public meeting on four Applications for Permit to Drill in the Sespe oilfield in Fillmore, Calif. The Forest Service is the lead federal agency conducting the NEPA and the meeting is expected to generate much public interest, including previous interest from U.S. Rep. Julia Brownley's (CA-26-D) office, due to the wells being in a national forest and near a California condor sanctuary. (2/9/18)

#### Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

**[UPDATE]** By late May, BOEM could issue permits for Atlantic G&G activities. In April, BOEM expects that NMFS will publish its Endangered Species Act Biological Opinion for eight Atlantic G&G permit applications under review by BOEM. In testimony on April 26, NMFS indicated it will issue the IHAs in a few weeks, and after the BiOp is complete. It will not issue an IHA for one of the applications, submitted by WesternGeco, as they have not completed the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) consultation for BOEM's permit process. BOEM's decision on the permits should take approximately three weeks after BiOp completion, and will include issuance of an EA for each permit. (4/12/18)

**[NEW]** In May 2018, BOEM expects to issue a decision on approval of a Site Assessment Plan for installation of a meteorological buoy to characterize the wind resource on Vineyard Wind's lease located offshore Massachusetts. The decision package has been prepared but is pending submission of appropriate supplemental financial assurance and annual rental payment before issuance. (4/27/18)

**[NEW]** In May 2018, Deepwater Wind is expected to submit a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) for their South Fork project located offshore New York. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for this COP is in surnaming. (4/27/18)

**[NEW]** On June 15, BOEM will meet with representatives from the State of Hawaii to discuss potential paths forward for the competitive planning and leasing process for offshore wind following a February 2017 response from DoD excluding much of the June 2016 Call for Information and Nominations Area as part of DoD's mission compatibility assessment. (4/27/18)

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

**[NEW]** By May 22, 2018, OSMRE will make available \$115M in AML Pilot Funds in accordance with the Consolidated and Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141). The recipients will include the six Appalachian States (Pennsylvania - \$25 million, Kentucky - \$25

million, West Virginia \$25 million; Ohio - \$10 million, Alabama - \$10 million; Virginia - \$10 million) and the Hopi, Navajo and Crow Tribes will also receive a total of \$10 million.

**[Update]** On or about May 23, OSMRE plans to submit the Sufco Mine's Greens Hollow Lease Tract mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. The Canyon Fuel Company's Sufco Mine is an underground coal mine located in Sevier and Sanpete Counties, UT. The mine employs 383 people and produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (4/12/2018)

On or about May 25, 2018, OSMRE plans to publish a notice of availability for the San Juan Mine Deep Lease Extension mining plan modification Draft Environmental Impact Statement in the *Federal Register*. A NEPA review meeting is scheduled with the Deputy Secretary and other departmental officials for May 3, 2018. The San Juan Mine is located approximately 4 miles northeast of Waterflow and 15 miles west of Farmington in San Juan County, New Mexico. The mine employs 360 people and currently produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/28/2018)

By May 30, 2018, OSMRE expects the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a lease for the Oklahoma Federal Lands: Pollyanna #8 coal mine permit revision. The applicant's existing coal reserves are expected to be depleted in less than 12 months; therefore, the additional coal reserve is needed to ensure continuous operations. BLM has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the coal lease on the expansion of the underground mine and is expected to have the draft lease completed in the upcoming weeks. With finalization of the leasing documents, OSMRE will be working on the development of a Mine Plan Decision Document (MPDD). Based upon OSMRE's close coordination with BLM during the development of the EA for the lease, we anticipate being able to adopt large portions of their EA for our MPDD. Future steps will include evaluation of the BLM EA for determination of NEPA adequacy, developing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EA, if needed, expected to be completed within 2 weeks following draft lease, followed by developing the EA and posting it for public review. Depending upon how much of the BLM EA that is adopted, the MPDD could be completed by July 31, 2018. (4/3/2018)

By May 30, 2018, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for Liberty #8. The new lease by application covers 1,620 acres of surface mining activities. OSMRE is expected to be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss with the mining company processing procedures, outline NEPA responsibilities, the development of a schedule associated with leasing and the process of a mining plan decision document. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

On March 6, 2018, OSMRE was notified by BLM of a new lease by application for Federal coal in Haskell County, Oklahoma. Evans-McCurtain Mine would include approximately 1,300 acres. BLM is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for Evans-McCurtain by May 30, 2018. The remaining reserves on the proposed lease are recoverable only by underground methods. Coal thickness

will dictate the use of continuous miner units or, possibly, a plow longwall. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

## **Awareness**

### **Bureau of Land Management**

**August 1.** BLM-MT/DK. The Western Montana District is proposing to complete a fee purchase acquisition using approved Land and Water Conservation Fund funding in the amount of \$1,025,000. The privately owned 307.57-acre parcel is located 23 miles south of Ennis, Montana. The parcel lies adjacent to BLM-administered lands (Dillon Field Office) within the Upper River Special Recreation Management Area along the Madison River. There would be increased access to 880 acres of BLM-managed lands, which would provide approximately 4.5 miles of additional access to the Madison River. The proposed date for this acquisition is Aug. 1, 2018. Willing landowners would like to complete the transaction as soon as possible. The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Madison County Commissioners support the BLM acquiring the private parcel. An appraisal, NEPA analysis, and Endangered Species Act work have been completed. No controversy is expected. (3/7/18)

### **Bureau of Offshore Energy Management**

[NEW] Marine Hydrokinetic offshore Oregon: BOEM is considering issuance of a lease to the Northwest National Marine Renewable Energy Center at Oregon State University (NNMREC-OSU) for the PMEC-SETS, a marine and hydrokinetic (MHK) test site offshore Newport, Oregon. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on the proposed project since it is a MHK project requiring a FERC license to operate. BOEM will be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document that will address both lease and license issuance. In Dec 2017, DOE awarded a \$40 million grant to PMEC-SETS to complete design, permitting and construction on the national wave energy testing facility. Oregon State has submitted a draft application to FERC and the region will be reviewing. (4/27/18)

[NEW] On March 23, BOEM submitted a memorandum summarizing recommendations to ASLM in response to a requirement of Secretarial Order No. 3359 “Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals” to submit to the Secretary a list of recommendations to improve access to lands to explore for and develop critical minerals; streamline permitting processes related to critical minerals development; and otherwise increase critical minerals discovery, production, and domestic refining. BOEM is also participating in the National Science and Technology Council Subcommittee on Critical and Strategic Mineral Supply Chains, which is developing a report in response to a requirement of Executive Order No. 13817 which was the impetus for S.O. 3359. BOEM currently awaits feedback from ASLM on the S.O. response and is drafting a contribution to the Subcommittee report for the E.O. (4/27/18)

As soon as possible, BOEM would like to publish the 2017 Comprehensive Inventory of OCS Oil and Natural Gas Resources Report to Congress. This report is required by Section 357 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. It directs the Secretary of the Interior to provide a report to Congress

within 6 months of the date of enactment (i.e., Aug. 8, 2005), with updates of at least every 5 years. This report is an update to the 2013 report. It is currently in surnaming with ASLM.

**[UPDATE]** On March 9, the public comment period for the BOEM DPP closed. BOEM has received approximately 1.86 million comment letters. BOEM is currently reviewing comments and working on the analyses for both the upcoming Proposed Program document and the associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. BOEM plans to brief ASLM on comment highlights and options guidance on May 8. (4/13/18)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND BUDGET**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On May 7 and 9-11, Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings. On May 8, Scott will participate in the COOP exercise.

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)**

**[UPDATE]** On May 10, the Secretary is scheduled to testify before the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee. Deputy Assistant Secretary Olivia Ferriter and Office of Budget Director Denise Flanagan will support the Secretary at the table. (05/02/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)**

Early to mid-May, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will hold an introductory meeting with House and Senate congressional staff to review preparation for the current fire season and high-level Wildland Fire Management priorities. (04/25/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)**

**[NEW]** On May 8-9, the Deputy Director, Office of Restoration and Damage Assessment, will participate in a meeting with the State Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration (NRDAR) Alliance at the Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge in Laurel, MD. The Alliance holds bi-annual meetings in which representatives of individual states and other federal agencies involved in NRDAR convene to discuss NRDAR and spill response issues (no press). (05/02/2018)

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

**[UPDATE]** On or about May 11, based on the vacancy of the Human Capital and Diversity Deputy Assistant Secretary (HCD DAS) position and the Policy and Environmental Management (PEM) DAS position, PDAS Scott Cameron plans to sign a memo temporarily detailing the offices from the HCD DAS and the PEM DAS to the Deputy Assistant Secretaries that will formally inherit those offices once Congress approves DOI's FY 2019 budget request. The effective date of the detailing would be on or about May 28. (04/25/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)

The National Level Exercise (NLE) 2018 is continuing through May 10, 2018 and will examine the ability of all levels of government, private industry, and nongovernmental organizations to protect against, respond to, and recover from a major Mid-Atlantic hurricane. The functional and full-scale portions of NLE 2018 will include the activation of DOI alternate Site Charlie on May 7 and 8. (04/13/2018)

*[NEW]* From May 11-16 is National Police Week. On May 14, the DOI Memorial Service will be held in Washington, DC at the Main Interior Building (Secretary Participation TBD). On May 15, the 37th Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service is scheduled at the U.S. Capitol. (05/02/2018)

*[NEW]* On May 8, the Federal Executive Board (FEB) of Minnesota will host the 41st Annual Civil Servant of the Year awards ceremony in Brooklyn Center, MN. 92 Federal employees will be recognized for outstanding service in the categories of Customer Service, Leadership, Unsung Hero, Innovation, and Excellence Beyond Expectation. Approximately 450 federal leaders and employees are currently registered to attend. Three DOI employees will be recognized during this program. (05/02/2018)

Early to mid-May, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will hold an introductory meeting with House and Senate congressional staff to review preparation for the current fire season and high-level Wildland Fire Management priorities. (04/23/2018)

*[UPDATE]* Early to mid-May, the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) in coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs is tentatively scheduled to rollout a Fuels/Active Management communications strategy. Work is ongoing with DOI Communications and the BIA to highlight Tribal successes stories. (05/02/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

On May 9, a report of the initial allocations of Hurricane Supplemental funding is due to Congress. The final version of the operating plans will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), after which the Office of Budget will prepare an allocation plan for Congress. (03/21/2018)

*[NEW]* The Department has nominated three projects and two programs for the 2018 Federal Energy and Water Management Award competition. The annual competition, coordinated by the Department of Energy Federal Energy Management Program, showcases projects, programs, and individuals across the Federal Government that promote energy and water efficiency and conservation, renewable energy implementation, and fleet management. Winners will be announced later in the summer and honored at a ceremony in October. This year's nominees include the National Park Service (NPS) for the NPS Bridge dashboard, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) for the MIB Energy Savings Performance Contract, the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Northeast Region Solar Renewable Energy Program, and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for the National Center Energy and Water Efficiencies. (05/02/2018)

#### Deputy Assistant Secretary - Human Capital and Diversity

On May 10, the Office of Personnel Management [final regulations](#) to implement the weather and safety leave provisions of the Administrative Leave Act of 2016 will go into effect. The Office of Human Resources is in the process of drafting guidance to explain the impact of the new regulations on the workforce. Under the regulations, agencies may grant weather and safety leave (paid time off) when it is determined that employees cannot safely travel to or from, or perform work at, their normal worksite, a telework site, or other approved location because of severe weather or another emergency situation. Under the statute, an agency will be unable, in most circumstances, to grant weather and safety leave to an employee who is a telework program participant and able to safely perform telework at the employee's home. This new provision will apply regardless of what is stated (or not stated) in the employee's telework agreement and in agency policies and agreements. (04/25/2018)

#### Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

**[NEW]** On May 15-17, the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) Executive Director will attend an invitation-only workshop hosted by the Moore Foundation and Conservation X Labs in Lake Tahoe, NV to envision technological solutions to barriers in freshwater conservation, including the threats posed by aquatic invasive species, such as zebra and quagga mussels. NISC's desired outcome of the event is one or more challenge prize competitions dedicated to finding technological solutions to some of the worst aquatic invasive species issues (no press). (05/02/2018)

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

**[NEW]** From June 18-20, PDAS Scott Cameron will be in Denver and Wyoming to participate in an Interior Business Center (IBC) building reopening with the GSA Administrator at the Denver Federal Center, participate in an employee listening session and related activities associated with implementing the PMB workplace harassment action plan, and visiting with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Defense (DOD), and Wyoming state and private partners on cooperative rangeland management of invasive weeds. (05/02/2018)

#### Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)

**[NEW]** On June 6, the Royalty Policy Committee will conduct its next public meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico. On June 5th, the sectors will meet to review their presentations for the public meeting, and on June 6th, the full Committee will meet to present recommendations, hold public comment, debate, and vote on recommendations to the Secretary. The Federal Register notice is being routed. (05/02/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)

From May 29 - June 1, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Wildfire Committee Meeting in Napa, CA to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. (04/18/2018)

*[NEW]* From June 4-7, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) National Indian Timber Symposium in Ocean Shores, WA to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. (05/02/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

From May 30-31, the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) will participate in the annual national meeting for Emergency Support Function (ESF) - Protection of Natural and Cultural Resources and Historic Properties (ESF #11) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Patriot's Plaza Building in Washington, DC. The meeting will focus on updates from each of the agencies that comprise ESF #11, as well as discussions on how to improve support to States, Tribes, and Territories during FEMA-led activations. The OEPC and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will be presenting on DOI's programs and capabilities that provide support to ESF #11. (03/28/2018)

Awareness

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

*[NEW]* The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently met with the Office of Wildland Fire, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service to discuss "Wildland Fire Fuel Management Activities" (Job Code 102653) in response to requests from the Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Chair and Ranking Member of its Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management. GAO plans to review: (1) mechanisms Federal land management agencies use to identify and prioritize fuel reduction projects and collaboration efforts with communities to identify and carry out fuel reduction activities; (2) agencies' self-assessment of their efforts to enhance community resilience; and (3) lessons recent wildland fire events offer on how agencies can best contribute to building community resilience. (05/02/2018)

*[NEW]* (Per GAO, distribution is highly restricted): The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently issued the draft GAO report "Animal Use in Federal Research: Agencies Share Information but Reporting and Data Quality Could be Strengthened" (GAO-18-459) in response to requests from the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies; other members of the House of Representatives; the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies; and other members of the Senate. The GAO reviewed several issues related to animals used in Federal research. While issuing no recommendations to the Department, GAO recommends that U.S. Department of Agriculture's



Animal and Plant Inspection Service clarify its reporting instructions and fully describe the potential limitations of the animal use data it makes available to the public. The response is due May 18. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently released the final report “Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation (ONHIR): Executive Branch and Legislative Action Needed for Closure and Transfer of Activities” (GAO-18-266) in response to requests from Chairman John Hoeven and Vice Chairman Tom Udall of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; Chairman Rob Bishop of the House Committee on Natural Resources; Senator John McCain; and Representative Lamar Smith. The GAO reviewed ONHIR's activities surrounding the relocation of the Navajo and Hopi Indians per the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act of 1974 and found ONHIR's relocation efforts continue three decades beyond the original deadline to complete operations. GAO issued four matters for congressional consideration, including that Congress provide successor agencies necessary authority to continue ONHIR's remaining activities upon closure. GAO also issued ONHIR five recommendations, including that it request a closure determination from the President and prepare necessary information to facilitate the transfer of its activities to a successor. ONHIR neither agreed nor disagreed with the five recommendations and stated it had either already taken steps or planned to once a successor identified. GAO asserts its recommendations to ONHIR remain valid. There are no recommendations to the Department; accordingly, no response is required. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently released the final report “Summary of Hurricane Sandy Audit and Inspection Reports and Management Advisories” (2017-FIN-057) summarizing the common themes and problems in award acquisition and grants management across all of its 19 Hurricane Sandy-related products the OIG issued over four years, ending July 31, 2017. The OIG determined that the Department did not have its own comprehensive emergency acquisition policy and guidance, during or since Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts. Rather than issuing recommendations, OIG issued suggested improvements. No response is required. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently released the Verification Review of Recommendations 58 through 64 from the Report Titled “A New Horizon: Looking to the Future of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement” (CR-EV-MMS-0015-2010). The OIG concurs that all seven recommendations are resolved and closed. (05/02/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR WATER AND SCIENCE**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tim Petty will be in the DC area the week of May 7-11, participating in internal meetings and briefings. He will participate in continuity activities May 7-8, and will be in meetings at USGS in Reston the morning of May 9. On May 9, he will chair a meeting of the DC Leadership Group with the Yakima River Basin Integrated Plan stakeholders.

From May 6-12, USGS Deputy Director Bill Werkheiser will be in Reston, Va./Washington, D.C. On May 7-8, Bill will participate in the Eagle Horizon COOP exercise.

The week of May 6, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman will be in Washington, D.C. attending various meetings. On May 8, she will participate in the COOP exercise. On May 9, she will participate in the DC Leadership Group meeting with the Yakima River Basin Integrated Plan stakeholders. On May 10, she will meet with Senator Heitkamp.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

***[UPDATE]*** Reclamation has completed work to address comments on the Central North Dakota Environment Assessment. Reclamation released the draft EA for a second public comment period on April 17. The comment period was originally scheduled to close May 2, but by request from the State of Missouri it was extended to May 17. (3/26/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to announce the two projects selected to receive funding for drought contingency planning. Drought contingency planning funding is available for applicants interested in developing a new drought plan or updating an existing drought plan. The Assistant Secretary of Water and Science is reviewing the selected projects. (4/9/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the data app prize competition. Reclamation, in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, is seeking the development of an application framework to support electronic data collection and capture across a diverse range of data collection situations using mobile devices. (3/26/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the Long-Term Corrosion Protection of Existing Hydraulic Steel Structures prize competition. This prize competition sought ideas for long-term corrosion protection for large, hydraulic steel structures beyond the protection provided by available coatings and cathodic protection. (3/25/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to publish the remaining completed Rural Water Supply Program Appraisal Reports. Timing is based on when the notice is published in the Federal Register. A news release will be issued in conjunction with the notice. (1/9/2018)

***[NEW]*** On May 7, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing an Environmental Assessment for the Buena Vista Water Storage District (BVWSD) Northern Area Pipeline (NAP) Eastern Extension Project proposing to provide \$1,000,000 to the BVWSD for installation of 5 miles of pipeline which will connect the NAP Southern Extension to eastern areas of the BVWSD. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 7, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the final environmental documents to disclose potential environmental effects associated with the issuance of contracts with districts and/or individual water users for conveying non-project water through Klamath Project facilities. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 7, Reclamation will host a media tour at the Teton Dam in Idaho site to discuss public safety and unauthorized access issues. Trespass and vandalism incidents have been increasing, and hazardous conditions are present throughout the site. (4/30/18).

[**NEW**] On May 7, Reclamation expects to release the final environmental assessment for Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District's proposal to transfer of up to 45,000 acre-feet of water, (up to 30,000 acre-feet Project Water and 15,000 acre-feet Base Supply), to the Colusa Drain Mutual Water Company annually from June through September, commencing with contract year 2018 and continuing through contract year 2022. The districts are located in northern California. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 11, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the draft EA for the City of Sanger, California Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Upgrade project. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 11, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the final EA and FONSI for the Tulare Irrigation District Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System Modernization project. The District is located in California. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 11, R&G Excavating, contractor for Klamath Irrigation District on the C Flume Replacement project, will work on site cleanup and the punch list. Placing crushed concrete over the buried siphon pipe will continue. The catwalk over the Lost River Diversion Channel will be placed. The C Siphon is located in Klamath Falls, Oregon. The C Siphon successfully conveyed water as canals were charged in preparation to convey non-project water. It is ready for the 2018 irrigation season as soon as water is available for the Klamath Project. Media interest is not expected. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 9, Alan Mikkelsen will be in the Klamath Basin meeting with stakeholders. His focus will be rolling out draft principles for a comprehensive basin-wide water and resource management plan. Media interest is expected. (4/30/2018)

Between May 7 and 25, Reclamation will publish the Title XVI and WIIN funding opportunity announcement. Updated criteria for this funding opportunity were previously published for public comment on March 12. Title XVI provides financial assistance to local water agencies for the planning, design, and construction of water reclamation and reuse projects. (4/9/2018)

[**NEW**] Reclamation's Rapid City Office in South Dakota is beginning the development of a new Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Belle Fourche Reservoir in cooperation with the South Dakota Department of Game Fish and Parks. The RMP will be the blueprint for future management and development at Belle Fourche Reservoir. The first step in the RMP will be

gathering public input thru a user survey, scheduled to begin in May, 2018. A news release is planned for May 7. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** From May 8-11, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) will hold its spring conference, “2018: CA Water: Building for the Future,” in Sacramento. Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Austin Ewell and regional directors are scheduled to speak. ACWA is the nation’s largest statewide coalition of public water agencies with 430 public agency members responsible for 90 percent of the water delivered to California cities, farms and businesses. Media interest is expected. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 9, Reclamation will release final environmental documents for the proposed Mendota Pool Group one-year exchange agreements. Under the proposed one-year exchange agreements, groundwater pumped annually into Mendota Pool, minus losses, would be used by Reclamation to offset existing water contract obligations at the Mendota Pool. Reclamation would then reduce Central Valley Project (CVP) deliveries to the Mendota Pool by the quantity exchanged and make an equivalent amount of up to 25,000 acre-feet per year of CVP water available to the Mendota Pool Group and Peracchi lands in Westlands Water District for irrigation purposes via the San Luis Canal. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 8-9, Reclamation’s Curecanti Field Office will close the East Portal Road located east of Montrose, Colorado for installation of a cattle guard. The road will reopen on Thursday, May 10. A press release will be sent out around May 3. (04/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 9, The Yakima Basin (state of Washington) Integrated Plan (Integrated Plan) Implementation Committee will provide an update briefing for the Integrated Plan DC Leadership Group. Meeting / briefing will be chaired by Assistant Secretary for Water and Science (ASWS) Tim Petty; with presentations and updates being given by Implementation Committee members (in person) and Reclamation Regional staff (via phone). Since 2013, the ASWS has facilitated bi-annual meetings of the Implementation Committee and DC Leadership Group, helping to advance Integrated Plan projects using State, federal, and private funding and collaboration. (4/30/18).

**[NEW]** May 9. A draft news release from Reclamation’s Eastern Colorado Area Office announcing new requirements related to preventing the introduction of invasive species on trailered watercraft at Horsetooth Reservoir and Carter Lake boat ramps, located in Colorado, in the weeks to come. New requirements will mean that boat ramps will remain locked except when an inspector is present. These protective measures are intended to prevent introduction and infestation of the lakes by invasive aquatic species, such as the quagga and zebra mussels. They would get this approved for release on May 9, 2018. We hope to do a joint news release after meeting with Larimer Parks Advisory Board the evening of May 8. The local newspaper usually has a reporter at the Board meeting. (4/30/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 10, Reclamation is planning to launch the Pathogen Monitoring for Potable Reuse – State 1 Prize Competition. This Reclamation prize competition is cosponsored by Xylem, Inc., in collaboration with the Water Environment & Reuse Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency, with technical assistance from the California State Water

Resources Control Board. Sponsors of the competition seek the development of improved monitoring techniques to protect public health and optimize the operations at water treatment facilities. Success could facilitate public and regulatory acceptance of direct potable reuse systems. (1/9/2018)

On May 10, Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office in Farmington, New Mexico will conduct the 43<sup>rd</sup> Project Construction Committee meeting for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. Agenda items will include reports on current construction contracts and ongoing design work and a review of overall project schedule and costs. Attendees will include representatives of the project participants (Navajo Nation, Jicarilla Apache Nation and City of Gallup), state, local, federal and Tribal agencies and entities, and interested community members. (04/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 11, Reclamation will release final environmental documents for the proposed East Bay treatment of weeds at Contra Loma Reservoir in California. Herbicide applications would be made by certified applicators using backpack sprayers, wands, drip lines or other suitable, non-aerial application methods. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 11, Reclamation will release final environmental documents on the proposed issuance of a 5-year Warren Act Agreement to Ivanhoe Irrigation District for the introduction and conveyance of up to 6,500 acre-feet per year of Kaweah River water in the Friant-Kern Canal in California. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 11, Reclamation will release final environmental documents on the proposed issuance of a 30-year Land Use Authorization to access, install, operate, maintain the solar cell energy generating project known as the San Luis Solar Project. The proposed project consists of three sites along the O'Neill Forebay on federal lands and is adjacent to the San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area in Gustine, Merced County, California. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 12, Reclamation will participate in the Annual Spring Wings Bird Festival in Fallon, Nevada, with a Newlands Project information booth. The festival will have family events, educational workshops and outdoors activities. For more information: <http://www.springwings.org/>. (4/30/2018)

On May 12, Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office staff located in Farmington, New Mexico will volunteer their time by participating in the annual Navajo Lake C.A.S.T. event. Over 60 participants and 30 plus volunteers are expected for the day-long event, which includes volunteers and donations from several local, state, and federal agencies. Some FCCO staff members were recently interviewed by a local radio station to promote the event. The media is invited to attend. (04/23/2018)

On May 14, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office and the City of Durango will hold a celebration/dedication for opening Lake Nighthorse for recreation. On April 1, the City of Durango had a soft opening of Lake Nighthorse for a couple hours to non-motorized use. Lake Nighthorse is located near Durango, Colorado, and is part of the Animas-La Plata Project. The Western Colorado Area Office is working closely with the city on preparing to open to motorized use on May 15 and construction of additional basic recreation facilities. Local media

are interested in Lake Nighthorse and coordination between Reclamation and the media will continue. (3/09/2018)

On or around May 15, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the award of a \$5.9 million contract for the modification of Howard Prairie Dam in Southwestern Oregon. The awardee is the Natt McDougall Company of Tualatin, Oregon. (04/23/2018)

Between May 16 and 18, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman is scheduled to visit the Mid-Pacific Region. She will meet with stakeholders and tour some Central Valley Project facilities in California. (4/16/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected projects under the Drought Resiliency Project funding opportunity announcement. Through drought resiliency projects Reclamation will provide funding for projects that will help communities prepare for and respond to drought. (4/9/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected entities to receive funding under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. The funding was announced in an FOA this past fall. It provides funding to develop a watershed management group, fund an existing watershed group, complete watershed restoration planning activities, and design watershed management projects. (4/9/2018)

On May 16 and 17, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's Salinity Control staff will participate at the Colorado River Basin Salinity Council and Forum meetings at the Washington County Water Conservancy District Office in St. George, Utah. Upper Colorado Regional Director Brent Rhees, and Lower Colorado Regional Director Terry Fulp have been invited to both meetings. The purpose of the council meeting is to discuss and take appropriate actions regarding the following: Basin States Program created by Public Law 110-246, which amended the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974; responses to the Advisory Council Report; and other items within the jurisdiction of the council. Meetings are open to the public; media generally does not attend. A Federal Register notice announcing the meeting is being routed for Departmental review and approval. The notice is expected to publish on or near Thursday, April 26, 2018. (03/19/2018)

Around May 18, Reclamation will conduct a second negotiation session with the Sacramento (California) Suburban Water District on contract terms and conditions for a long-term Warren Act contract. The contract will be negotiated for the conveyance of up to 29,000 acre-feet of non-Central Valley Project water per year using excess capacity in Folsom Reservoir. A news release will be distributed in advance of the event. (4/23/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

In May, the USGS will publish an online Science Snippet about a trio of recently published papers that show how fish, macroinvertebrates, and algae are affected by chemical and physical stressors in streams. The studies are based on the 2013 Midwest Stream Quality Assessment, which focused on 11 Midwestern states, and show that there are no pristine streams in the region.

Chemical stressors, primarily nutrients and pesticides, and physical stressors, primarily excessive fine sediment and a disturbed riparian zone, have altered small streams and affected the number and diversity of fish, algae, and macroinvertebrates that call these streams home. (3/12/2018)

This week, the USGS will release a Scientific Investigation Report co-authored with the Bureau of Reclamation that compares and contrasts the two agencies' water-use information programs in the Colorado River Basin. The report also describes the legal drivers for each program, clarifies confusing terminology, compares the methods used, and contrasts the information reported by each agency. This detailed comparison shows how the different missions, programmatic drivers, and user communities of USGS and Reclamation lead to different approaches to water-use data collection, analysis, and reporting. Despite the differences, the program comparison presented in this report identifies opportunities for closer coordination and sharing of information between the two bureaus, as well as program components where inter-bureau collaboration can improve water-use estimate methodologies. (3/6/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

**[NEW]** ASWS Travel: AS/WS Tim Petty is likely to travel to the Columbia River Basin during the week of June 25-29, to participate in Columbia River Treaty discussions and potential site visits.

#### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

On May 21 through May 24, Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region will host a bi-annual Power Operations and Maintenance Workshop with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Discussion topics will include technical subjects related to hydro powerplant and pumping facilities operations, maintenance, and engineering activities; best practices; and lessons learned. The event will be held at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, Nevada. No press is expected. (3/12/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 22, the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group will host a webinar/conference call. A *Federal Register* notice is being routed for Departmental review and approval and will be published on May 4. Topics of discussion will include updates on current basin hydrology, the Adaptive Management Program budget and workplan for fiscal year 2019, possible experiments at Glen Canyon Dam this water year, the status of AMWG membership appointments, and other administrative items as needed. The webinar is open to media and the public. (3/26/2018)

On May 22, Reclamation will conduct a congressional briefing via WebEx, with the Idaho congressional delegation on Idaho water projects, operations and issues. (4/23/2018)

On May 23, members of the Lower Clearwater Exchange Project will be leading a tour of the Lewiston Orchards Water Exchange Project (Lewiston, Idaho) for Trout Unlimited and the Resources Legacy Fund with support from the Nez Perce Tribe, Reclamation and the Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District. Invitations have been extended to representatives from the offices of Sen. Risch, Sen. Crapo, and Rep. Labrador. The water exchange and title transfer are intended to benefit Snake River steelhead, protect natural and cultural resources important to the Nez Perce

Tribe, and provide a reliable water supply for the Lewiston Orchard Irrigation District patrons. (4/02/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement on the New Mexico Unit Project. The proposed project is part of the Central Arizona Project, authorized by the Colorado River Basin Project Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90-537, 43 U.S.C. Ch. 32, as amended by the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA, Pub. L. 108-451). Pursuant to the AWSA, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to contract with water users in New Mexico for water from the Gila River, its tributaries and underground water sources. Use of Gila River water under the AWSA is conditioned on satisfying various laws and agreements related to the use and exchange of Gila River water in New Mexico and Arizona. The NM Unit will divert Gila River water in New Mexico for this purpose. The AWSA provided funding to construct the NM Unit or, to develop other alternatives in southwestern New Mexico to meet demand. Reclamation and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission are joint lead agencies for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act and other related environmental regulations regarding the proposed Project. Issuance of the NOI will initiate the formal public scoping process associated with NEPA compliance. (3/27/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the *Federal Register*, to be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. The FR notice requests public comments on the Department's proposed decision to re-allocate Central Arizona Project non-Indian agricultural (CAP NIA) priority water consistent with a recommendation made to the Secretary by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) in January 2014. This process is in accordance with Section 104 of the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act (Public Law 108-451), which directed the Secretary to allocate to the ADWR up to 96,295 acre-feet of CAP NIA priority water; this water is to be held by ADWR under contract in trust for further allocation, until a reallocation recommendation is submitted by ADWR to the Secretary. In 2012, ADWR began the reallocation recommendation process, and on January 16, 2014, ADWR submitted its recommendation to the Secretary. As explained in the proposed FR notice, the Secretary proposes to make 46,629 acre-feet of the NIA Priority CAP water available under long-term contracts in the amounts and to the municipal and industrial entities identified in ADWR's recommendation. Reallocation of CAP NIA priority water would address the imbalance of water supply and demand in central Arizona by providing renewable water supplies to those entities with a projected demand/supply imbalance based on ADWR's evaluation criteria. (4/23/2018)

In late June, Reclamation, Klamath Irrigation District, R&G Excavating, Klamath County, and the Klamath Basin irrigation community will hold an event to celebrate the completion of the new C Siphon which will convey irrigation water across the Lost River slough and Wildcat Canyon. The event will celebrate the success of the two-year construction project and a decades-long effort from procuring funding to construction. Media interest is expected. (4/23/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

[**NEW**] On May 20, the USGS will announce a new Scientific Investigation Report that provides inundation maps and flood details following Hurricane Harvey for areas of eastern and coastal Texas. Hurricane Harvey was the most significant rainfall event in US history, according to an



upcoming USGS report. High water mark data, along with flood flow information from USGS streamgages, were used to create 19 inundation maps documenting the areal extent and depth of the flooding. In the immediate aftermath of Harvey, the USGS and FEMA initiated a cooperative study to evaluate the magnitude of flooding, determine the probability of occurrence and map the extent of the flood in Texas. USGS field crews collected 2,123 high-water marks in across southeast Texas. A news release is planned for Texas and the report will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. (4/26/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 21-24 USGS scientists will present genetic and disease research on bighorn sheep in Dinosaur National Monument (WY), Yellowstone National Park (WY, MT, ID), and Glacier National Park (MT and Canada) at the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council in Whitefish (MT). Bighorn sheep are an important species in our national parks and monuments, an important game species, and an important part of food webs. Research in Dinosaur National Monument is an assessment of habitat, movement, disease, and population structure that informs federal and state managers on the success of previous introductions and considerations for future monitoring and management. Research on Glacier National Park bighorns assessed effects of population size and habitat quality on social contacts and disease. Information on whether and how the bighorns in Glacier, Waterton Lakes National Park, and the Blackfeet Reservation are subdivided provides options for management in a disease event or to proactively reduce the likelihood of disease. This is especially important as a fire in 2015 may bring together two subpopulations that were previously semi-isolated (and thus buffered from disease). Research on genomic data from Glacier, Yellowstone National Park and other Western state populations will provide guidelines to management for sample sizes needed to describe the genetic health of their populations. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] On May 21, the USGS will be publishing a required Congressional report that summarizes USGS progress towards a national assessment of water availability and use. This National Water Census report, authorized by the SECURE Water Act (P.L. 111-11, Section 9508 (d)) (42 USC 10368), is the second in a series of reports to Congress that explains how the Water Census has progressed towards goals from 2013 to 2017. This is a congressionally mandated report that describes critical work the USGS has completed to understand, assess, and deliver information about water availability, as well as the collaboration and coordination with other agencies and organizations that are essential to the success of the National Water Census. (4/30/2018)

On May 22-23 USGS and USDA will convene a National Imagery Summit on behalf of the Federal Geographic Data Committee at the USGS HQ in Reston, VA. Invitations are being extended to over three-hundred Government-only attendees, composed of White House, remote sensing policy, and civil agency leaders who oversee U.S. land imaging operations. The event will be webcast to US government GIS and land management scientists and practitioners across the United States. The purpose of the Summit is to address emerging challenges in today's dynamic imagery marketplace, with a focus on shortcomings and conflicts in U.S. policies related to overhead data collection, data management, and the variety of roles served by U.S. Federal and State agencies in meeting public needs for remotely sensed data and applications. Attendees will discuss current and future national land imaging needs, the status of current national capabilities, and national collection and data management strategies. (4/24/2018)

[**NEW**] In mid-May, the USGS will highlight research on fish passage to assist migratory fish transit past man-made barriers and reach upstream spawning grounds. USGS fish passage research provides critical information needed for specialists to design and build effective fish passages that enable key species to get past dams, navigate waterways and complete migration cycles. These specially designed structures enable fish to bypass blocked waterways, giving migratory fish access to key spawning areas, nurseries and other crucial habitats. A USGS Feature Story is planned. (4/26/2018)

[**NEW**] In May, the USGS will highlight a new USGS Circular entitled “A snapshot of women of the U.S. Geological Survey in STEM and related careers.” Women’s participation rate in the sciences is still lower than men’s and relatively few women reach top scientific leadership roles. The USGS needs specialists from a growing variety of science and related fields to remain a science leader. Given that girls and women are underrepresented, it is logical to look to them to fulfill society’s growing need and demand for science. With the online release of this circular, USGS will embark on a long-term campaign to encourage and inspire students, particularly girls and young women from middle school through early career, to consider STEM careers, and to reach experienced female professionals for science and leadership positions in USGS. This will include an internal USGS and DOI communications component to honor, inspire, and celebrate women within the USGS. The circular will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. Printed copies will be available in June. A social media campaign is planned. (4/26/2018)

[**UPDATE**] On May 28, the USGS will announce a new study that characterizes land and water surface changes and identify underlying drivers of change throughout Alaska from 1984 to 2015 based on combined Landsat imagery and climate reanalysis data. The study identifies the percent of Alaska’s lands that changed during the last three decades, the ecoregion most affected, and the agent most responsible for the change. The study also discusses how increased air temperatures affect vegetation growth and health and water availability. The study will be published in *Global Change Biology* and a national news release is planned. (4/20/2018)

In May, the USGS will release a new Circular entitled “Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2015.” This report documents the national compilation of water use data issued by the USGS once every 5 years for the entire U.S. The report will present state-level water use data for the year 2015 and discuss long-term trends in water use. An accompanying data release of county-level data will be made available concurrently with the Circular. Also, a data visualization for the Circular and county-level data is being created. All three products will be released concurrently, and a news release is planned. (3/14/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 31, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee will hold a field hearing to review the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program. USGS has been invited to testify at the hearing, which is scheduled to take place at the Huntington Beach Council Chambers (California). Steve McCabe, NEHRP director at NIST, and possibly Frank Vernon from Scripps/UCSD are also scheduled to testify. (4/26/2018)

In May, USGS will highlight research that examined differential changes in the onset of spring across U.S. National Wildlife Refuges and North American migratory bird flyways. The study used indices of spring onset, the First Leaf Index and the First Bloom Index, as proxies of habitat change for the period 1901 to 2012 at three spatial scales: the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System; the four major bird migratory flyways in North America; and the seasonal ranges (i.e., breeding and non-breeding grounds) of two migratory bird species, Bluewinged Warbler and Whooping Crane. The results provide insight into how differential shifts in the phenology of disparate but linked habitats could inform local- to landscape-scale management strategies for the conservation of migratory bird populations. A Top Story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

[**NEW**] In mid-May, a workshop is planned to be held in Bozeman, Montana to support the Custer-Gallatin National Forest's Forest Plan Revision. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for May 16 and 17 and is being supported by scientists of the North Central Climate Adaptation Science Center. Involved partners and stakeholders include the U.S. Forest Service, Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee, Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative, The Wilderness Society, Minnesota State University, and the National Park Service. (5/1/2018)

[**UPDATE**] In June, the USGS will be highlighting remote sensing efforts underway. The first part will focus on a new research effort to survey water resources in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain from the air. Beginning in late February, the USGS began the first in a series of flights in Greenwood, Mississippi, to acquire large-scale airborne geophysical data in support of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain (MAP) Regional Water Availability Study, part of a groundwater availability study in the region. The USGS is working in partnership with multiple state agencies. The second is a UAS project in Colorado where the USGS will be testing a variety of noncontact sensors mounted on small, unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) to measure river metrics including velocity, top width, area, and discharge and compare these data to ground-based conventional streamgaging methods. A top story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

## **Awareness**

### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

[**NEW**] On April 27, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office was contacted by Deborah Uroda with Durango TV about water conditions in Navajo Reservoir and the San Juan River and lack of snowpack in the mountains and the expected drought this summer. In addition, Gary Harmon with the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, contacted this office about water conditions of the Aspinall Unit in Western Colorado. We are experiencing dry conditions and a forecast for low spring runoff. The latest runoff volume forecast for Navajo Reservoir projects 235,000 acre-feet of inflow between April and July, which is 32 percent of average. (04/30/2018)

[**NEW**] On April 30, Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office was contacted by Peter O'Dowd of National Public Radio in Boston, Massachusetts, who is interested in scheduling an interview on the drought along the Middle Rio Grande. This is based on the Reclamation news release issued with the release of our Annual Operating Plan. They specifically want to discuss the early drying and the potential for drying in the Albuquerque reach. This is all due to one of the lowest

snowpacks in the history of the project. The interview is tentatively scheduled for the week of May 1 at the local affiliate KUNM's studio. (04/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On March 21, Reclamation's Provo Area Office was notified by a Utah State Parks Manager at Red Fleet Reservoir that a 14-year-old boy had been apprehended after he had been observed throwing rocks containing dinosaur footprint impressions into the reservoir. Reclamation is considering whether to recommend prosecutorial action and assessing ways to protect the impressions in the future. (04/30/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Reclamation's Dakotas Area Office is preparing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Reclamation and the Province of Manitoba regarding the development of the Adaptive Management Plan for the Northwest Area Water Supply Biota Water Treatment Plant. The draft MOU was provided to the Province of Manitoba. Manitoba has provided initial comments back to Reclamation. These comments are currently being reviewed by the Solicitor's Office. (3/27/2018)

On April 19, Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office Deputy Area Manager Jim Wilber and Public Affairs Specialist Mary Carlson interviewed with Henry Fountain of the New York Times on the Annual Operating Plan for the Middle Rio Grande. The interview was based on a news release issued by Reclamation in mid-April when they held public meetings to release the plan. The forecast shows early and ongoing drying in the Middle Rio Grande and diminishing storage in our reservoirs through the summer. The interview was neutral. The reporter planned to talk to several other sources and didn't have a potential release date for the story. (04/23/2018)

On April 24, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's public affairs and water operations staff participated in an interview at Glen Canyon Dam with Arizona Public Media, a Tucson affiliate for National Public Radio. The focus of the interview is Lake Powell operations, power generation at Glen Canyon Dam, ongoing drought and Lake Powell's continued value to the western U.S. (04/23/2018)

As of April 23, The Bureau of Reclamation's Fresno Dam in Montana is experiencing sustained high inflows as a result of snowmelt runoff in the basin upstream of Fresno Dam. Inflows into Fresno Reservoir are decreasing and are currently estimated at 3,000 cubic feet-per-second. The current total release from Fresno Dam to the Milk River is approximately 3,400 cfs. The current reservoir level is 2576.4 feet, 1.4 feet above normal full pool level, 2575.0 feet. This elevation is the peak expected elevation based on forecasted inflows to Fresno Reservoir. Reclamation is advising local emergency management officials of these conditions for awareness only. Inflows are expected to remain much higher than average for the next week. In accordance with the Fresno Dam Emergency Action Plan, Reclamation is required to notify downstream emergency management officials anytime Fresno Reservoir releases combined with downstream tributary flow exceeds safe channel capacity. Minor to major flooding is occurring along the Milk River. (4/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Following coordination with his counterpart Assistant Secretaries, AS/WS Tim Petty provided a Decision Memorandum for the Secretary's consideration setting forth the Department's position on the priority of the key drivers for the upcoming Columbia River Treaty

negotiations. The Department will actively participate in Columbia River Treaty negotiations/activities through the engagement of Assistant Secretary Petty, and staffed by Reclamation, with the treaty's two technical entities, Bonneville Power Administration and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Department supports the two key drivers being flood control and hydropower generation. (4/2/2018)

The April 2018 24-Month Study establishes that Lake Powell operations will shift to “balancing releases” for the remainder of water year 2018. Under balancing, the contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead will be balanced by the end of the water year, but not more than 9.0 million acre-feet and not less than 8.23 maf shall be released from Lake Powell. Based on the most probable inflow forecast, this April 24-Month Study projects a balancing release of 9.0 maf in water year 2018; the actual release in water year 2018, however, will depend on hydrology in the remainder of water year and will range from 8.23 to 9.0 maf. The projected release from Lake Powell in water year 2018 will be updated each month throughout the remainder of the water year. Based on the current inflow forecast and projected releases, the April 24-Month Study projects Lake Powell elevation will end water year 2018 near 3,598 feet, with approximately 11.6 maf in storage (48 percent of capacity). Currently, Lake Powell is 53 percent full, with a live storage content of 12.8 maf. (4/16/2018)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a press release (3/22/2018) announcing completion of a Species Status Assessment and Five-Year Review, which proposes down-listing the humpback chub from "endangered" to "threatened." The humpback chub is still classified as endangered, and at this time, it is only proposed for down-listing. If the classification of the species is officially changed to threatened, as the Five-Year Review recommends, it will remain fully protected under the Endangered Species Act. The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program have been key contributors to the recovery of this native fish. Reclamation's provision of flows to support native fish and participation in and funding of the conservation and recovery programs is a central reason this species is able to be considered for down-listing. Collaborative partnerships and management of resources have protected the species from extinction. (3/27/2018)

The Department and Reclamation are working with the Council of Environmental Quality on development of a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act for select types of title transfers. In cases where the transfer of title from Reclamation to a willing entity is non-controversial, non-complicated and would not result in a change in the operations or management of the facilities, establishment of a categorical exclusion could decrease the time required for Reclamation to complete title transfers. (3/20/2018)

Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the Federal Register to begin charging fees at Lake Berryessa in Napa County, California. The fees will be used to upgrade facilities and pay for costs associated with recreation. Reclamation will ensure visitors are aware of the proposed plan by holding public scoping meetings, issuing press releases, posting it on the Lake Berryessa website at [www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html), and posting announcements at day-use areas. During public scoping meetings and the public comment period, Reclamation will seek input from the public regarding the possible use of funds collected. Public scoping meetings and public outreach will ensure the public is aware of all proposed fees and passes available to them. (2/26/2018)

Legislation authorizing the Westlands Settlement (“Settlement”) (H.R. 1769) is pending before the House of Representatives. The current stay of the *Firebaugh* injunction expired on January 15, 2018, and the district court did not grant an additional stay. As a result, Reclamation is preparing to expend significant funds to implement the Control Schedule of drainage measures for Westlands as approved by the court and could face additional litigation. The January 2018 Revised Control Schedule identifies a funding need of about \$3 million in FY 2018. Based on Congressional action to date on the fiscal year 2018 budget, upon final passage Reclamation expects to be able to accommodate the \$3 million identified in the Control Schedule. If required, it also identifies a funding need of over \$12.2 million in FY 2019, which is not currently included in the fiscal year 2019 President’s budget; over \$13.8 million in FY 2020, over \$29.7 million in FY 2021—ramping up to a need of over \$101 million in FY 2023. The funding needs to implement drainage are significant and represent a substantial financial obligation for the Department of the Interior. (2/9/2018)

The Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region, Yuma Area Office intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement in early June 2018 to request proposals to fund projects for activities in support of its Endangered Species and Environmental Restoration programs in Federal FY 2018 (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018). The YAO periodically makes funding available for conducting activities for Threatened and Endangered species and their habitats under Section 7(a)1 of the Endangered Species Act under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Program. Reclamation has made \$110,000.00 of funding available for award for this FWCAP Financial Assistance FOA. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that FY 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Reclamation will limit total funding to generally not more than \$50,000 in Federal funding to each applicant. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Eligible applicants are state and local governments, non-profit organizations and institutions, public and private institutions and organizations, federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments, individuals, small businesses, for-profit organizations, and Native American organizations. (4/9/2018)

On April 12, the Glen Canyon Dam Experimental Technical Team met with the Experimental Leadership Team and the Department of the Interior to recommend that Macroinvertebrate Production Flows, also known as “Bug Flows,” be tested between May 1 and August 31, 2018. The Assistant Secretary for Water and Science approved the Bug Flows via a signed memorandum dated April 13, 2018. Bug Flows consist of steady weekend releases from Glen Canyon Dam and normal fluctuating releases during the weekdays. The steady weekend flows are expected to provide favorable conditions for insects to lay eggs along the Colorado River downstream of Glen Canyon Dam, while the fluctuating flows during the weekdays are designed to be slightly higher, thus preventing the eggs from drying out. This experiment is expected to have positive benefits to the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in Glen, Marble, and Grand canyons. The purpose of the experimental flow is to test the effectiveness of Bug Flows on improving insect production and to increase the availability of food for aquatic and terrestrial life. This experiment will be conducted under the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan. On April 30, a press release will be issued. (3/26/2018)

## *U.S. Geological Survey*

[**NEW**] Nearly statewide flooding from snowmelt is wrapping up in Maine as the snowpack is nearly depleted. There is potential for small amounts of additional rain this week, with warming temperatures that may cause the last of the snow to melt and an additional rise. As of April 30, most sites have peaked; there was one 25-50 year peak, five 10-25 year peaks, two 5-10 year peaks, and six 2-5 year peaks. Sites are beginning to recede below NWS minor flood elevations. No gages were damaged. As many as 12 staff of the Maine Office have made over 40 measurements at 28 stations since Thursday of last week. Nine more stations will be measured today and tomorrow, with 2-3 crews of 2 in the field during that time. Interaction with the NWS, cooperating agencies and the public continues. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 9, USGS will participate in the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine's Committee on Earth Resources' one-day workshop titled "Critical Minerals and Materials: Opportunities, challenges, and needs for U.S. manufacturing, economy, and security." (5/2/2018)

On May 12, the USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory (Vancouver, Wash.) will hold a one-day public open house. USGS scientists will take a break from their day-to-day work to set up volcano displays and prepare science demonstrations to share with the public. The event is free and all ages are welcome. A local media advisory will be distributed. (3/27/2018)

On May 16 and 17, USGS scientists will meet with the Nez Perce Tribal Council to discuss ongoing research to investigate mercury cycling and bioaccumulation on a section of the Snake River referred to as Hells Canyon. The USGS, in collaboration with Idaho Power Company and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, started the investigation in 2014 to evaluate processes controlling mercury transport, cycling, and bioaccumulation in Hells Canyon. The work is a collaborative effort with scientists from the USGS Wisconsin Water Science Center, USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, USGS Idaho Water Science Center, and the USGS Water Mission Area. (4/25/18)

[**NEW**] In a new USGS Powell Center project, scientists from the USGS, Columbia University, and the EPA will lead an international working group to synthesize information on terrestrial nitrogen fixation worldwide. Biological nitrogen fixation is the largest source of the essential nutrient nitrogen that feeds terrestrial ecosystems worldwide. As a result, biological nitrogen fixation has far reaching effects on ecosystem properties such as water quality and carbon storage, sustainability for plant growth and soil fertility, and the global climate system. However, there is much uncertainty in how local measurements should be upscaled for large-scale assessments and Earth systems modeling. Researchers will synthesize nitrogen fixation data for many different species, including free-living bacteria, symbiotic plants, mosses, lichens, and others. New methods will create maps of nitrogen fixation across the United States and North America, and analyses of environmental drivers will improve future predictions of biological nitrogen fixation in response to regional and global environmental change. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] This spring, USGS scientists will begin collecting bird data on grasslands in Montana. A local news release is planned for the communities of Malta and Glasgow to alert residents in the area that scientists will be conducting field work on public lands. (4/26/2018)

[**NEW**] The Department of Justice has solicited the USGS for Bob Holmes (or someone with equivalent knowledge and experience) to be the expert hydraulics witness in the second phase of the Ideker Farms Missouri River litigation. The work effort would be approximately 6 months of calendar time. It is expected that Bob will be selected, but this is not yet final. Plans are being made to backfill Holmes flood coordination duties. (4/30/2018)

Executive Order 13817/Secretarial Order 3359 milestones: On April 19, 2018, the USGS delivered to the Secretary a draft plan to better assess the Nation's subsurface mineral potential through new collection of geophysical, geologic, and topographic data. Beginning in May, the USGS anticipates additional review and input from other Federal agencies and external partners, and ongoing revisions as required to inform the government-wide strategy to be published by the Department of Commerce in August 2018. Coordination with white house staff continues on next steps following the assessment of the public comments received on the draft critical mineral list. Another Federal Register Notice has been suggested as an option. Next steps in support of the Executive Order include USGS technical input to interagency drafting teams on: (1) the potential to better use above-ground sources of critical minerals through recycling, reprocessing, and substituting alternative materials; (2) existing foreign trade dependencies for critical minerals. (2/9/2018)

In late June, a delegation of 180 officials from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are invited to meet at the University of Oklahoma, the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) host university, during the 2018 Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council Ministerial. The South Central CASC is planning to highlight their science work during the officials' visit and will be part of the University of Oklahoma's discussions for future plans to collaborate with these officials and stakeholders. The CEC Council Chairmanship and Ministerial rotates between the US, Mexico, and Canada each year, and Administrator Scott Pruitt (current chair) selected Oklahoma City as the location for the 2018 meeting. The theme for this year's Council Ministerial is "Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth". (4/24/2018)

[**NEW**] The USGS Energy Resources Program (ERP), through the U.S. Department of the Interior's Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP) and the U.S. State Department, has been invited to participate in a scoping assessment of Romanian oil and gas concessions, data management and environmental risk mitigation. The assessment, which will take place in June, will be led by State's Energy Resources Bureau (ENR) and will include site visits to Bucharest and Constanta. This initial assessment might lead to further energy governance and capacity building in the region later this year. (5/2/2018)

[**NEW**] The USGS continues progress toward implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) for the energy geochemistry laboratories. External audits are complete and USGS is taking corrective actions to address audit results and preparing a formal report to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) that certifies that a functional QMS is fully implemented. The target date to complete the package internally is May 18, after which results will be reviewed



with USGS management and submitted to DOI for further review. Any changes will be reviewed again, with final submission to the OIG scheduled for late June. (5/2/2018)

[**NEW**] This summer, a manuscript on a new USGS assessment of undiscovered conventional oil and gas resources in downip Paleogene formations of the U.S. Gulf Coast will be published in the Gulf Coast Association of Geologic Societies Bulletin. In 2007, based on only sparse data, the USGS estimated with large uncertainty over 50 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered gas. Recent discoveries offshore and data from wells onshore provided new evidence of a working petroleum system in these formations. Subsequently, eight assessment units (AUs) for conventional resources and three AUs for continuous (unconventional) resources were identified. (5/2/2018)

[**NEW**] The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NAS) has nearly completed a strategic review of the USGS Energy Resources Program. The study is to evaluate the long term strategic priorities of the program and suggest alternatives or changes for the program to consider. A committee was assembled by the NAS and has now met three times, twice with program participation and once in closed session. A rough draft of the report is due in early July, with a final report due by August. (5/2/2018)

Beginning August 6, the USGS will conduct the Mid-Atlantic Resource Imaging Experiment (MATRIX) seismic project on Atlantic margin in partnership with BOEM and the U.S. Department of Energy. The goal of the project is to image distribution of gas hydrate and shallow gas on Atlantic margin between Hudson Canyon and Cape Hatteras across areas considered highly prospective for gas hydrates. Seismic data will be collected over a period of 2.5 to 3 weeks. An Incidental Harassment Authorization Application was submitted to NMFS in March, and initial comments have been received. The Draft Environmental Assessment and request for Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act was also submitted to NMFS in March. The draft EA is posted on the USGS Coastal/Marine Hazards & Resources Program's environmental compliance website and is open for public comment until April 19. (4/6/2018)

[**NEW**] Secretarial Order 3352 milestones: The reprocessing of vintage 2-D seismic data acquired in the mid-1980s over the Section 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is progressing, with expected delivery in the summer of 2018. A resource assessment of the Section 1002 area will be deferred pending the acquisition of 3-D seismic data by industry. In the interim, the USGS will shift its efforts on resource assessments on Alaska's North Slope to accelerate the evaluation of the Central North Slope (CNS) lands situated between ANWR and the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The expected completion date of the CNS assessment is December 2019; an assessment covering NPR-A was released in December 2017. Field work to support the broader North Slope effort is scheduled for this summer, with logistical planning now underway. (5/2/2018)

### **Upcoming USGS Publications**

[**NEW**] A paper entitled "The risk of rodent introductions from shipwrecks to seabirds on Aleutian and Bering Sea islands" was recently published online in *Biological Invasions*. The

study details details the likelihood of rodent introductions to islands of Alaska via shipwrecks and the risk to seabird colonies. The analysis is useful to prioritize where resources should best be used to prevent catastrophic decimation of seabirds by rats. Partners include USFWS, NOAA Fisheries, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Tern Again Consulting, Wildlife Conservation Society, Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands LCC. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A new USGS Open-File Report entitled, “Juvenile Lost River and Shortnose Sucker Year Class Strength, Survival, and Growth in Upper Klamath Lake, Oregon, and Clear Lake Reservoir, California—2016 Monitoring Report” was recently published online April 20. The report is part of a long-term monitoring program that monitors juvenile Lost River and shortnose sucker production, growth, and survival in both Upper Klamath Lake and Clear Lake to help inform management and recovery actions conducted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Bureau of Reclamation. Data are anticipated to be useful for identification of environmental variables affecting annual production and survival of young suckers. The monitoring program has helped to describe sucker population dynamics in the two lakes, but the causes of high apparent first year sucker mortality in Upper Klamath Lake remain unknown. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] On May 1 a new USGS summary entitled “2017 Exploration Review in Mining Engineering” was published in the journal *Mining Engineering*. The USGS produces this summary of 2017 international mineral exploration activities which draws upon information from multiple industry and USGS sources and published literature. The data summarizes budget estimates for worldwide exploration activities in 2017 for 30 nonfuel mineral commodities and metal alloys, based on company surveys. Surveys focused on precious metals, base metals, bulk commodities and other commodities. These analyses identify where mineral exploration is occurring by commodity and region, characterize the intensity of activity that is taking place in each region for selected mineral commodities and determine those factors that most affect changes in exploration activity. (5/1/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 14 a new USGS cooperator report entitled “Evaluation of Icebreaker Wind project vendor proposals for radar-based monitoring of flying animals” will be available online from the USGS Publications Warehouse. The Icebreaker Wind Project is a pilot six turbine offshore wind energy development proposed for western Lake Erie. As part of the environmental regulatory process, project developers must gather radar data on use of project airspace by flying animals during pre- and post-construction. Three vendors responded to the developer’s request for information to conduct that work. At the request of the developer, the Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation, and Region 3 US FWS, Ecosystem Services, USGS was asked to provide a scientific assessment as to which vendor’s technology was most likely to successfully gather data on the development’s airspace use by birds and bats. The USGS was approached for this assessment because the agency is home to a leading authority on the use of radar to track flying animals. The report may have influence beyond this development, since it addresses technical and environmental concerns that bird monitoring associated with other proposed offshore developments will likely encounter. (5/1/2018)

[**NEW**] A new paper entitled, “The complete mitochondrial genome of Hine’s emerald dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana* Williamson) via NGS sequencing” was accepted in an upcoming volume of *Mitochondrial DNA Part B*. The Hine’s emerald dragonfly (HED) was listed as endangered by

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1995 and currently occurs in Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, and Ontario, Canada. This information could be used to develop species-specific molecular assays for surveying potential HED habitat by eDNA sampling, thus providing another tool for resource managers. (05/02/18)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “The Role of Environmental Driving Factors in Historical and Projected Carbon Dynamics of Wetland Ecosystems in Alaska” was accepted for publication in *Ecological Applications*. The paper characterizes research that conducted to assess carbon dynamics and the relative influence of changing environmental driving factors on carbon balance in wetland ecosystems of Alaska. Among its findings, the study estimates that wetland ecosystems of Alaska lost carbon during the historical period (1950-2009), but that wetland ecosystems will sequester carbon during the remainder of this century (2010-2099). (4/30/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Past and future global transformation of terrestrial ecosystems under climate change” was accepted for publication in *Science*. The paper uses the ecosystem transitions between the last glacial period and the present as a metric to determine sensitivity of global ecosystems to future climate change. A key finding in the paper is that under business-as-usual greenhouse gas emission scenarios, most terrestrial ecosystems worldwide are at risk of major transformation in the next century. (4/30/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Quantifying climate-related interactions in shallow and deep storage and Evapotranspiration in a forested, seasonally water-limited watershed in the Southeastern United States” was accepted for publication in *Water Resources Research*. The paper quantifies water budgets for the Panola Mountain Research Watershed for a 30-year period that included five long-term droughts and delivers information that can be used by water managers to meet current and future water needs while addressing the impacts of climate patterns and change on water availability. Anticipated online publication is in May 2018 (5/1/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Assessing Historical and Projected Carbon Balance of Alaska: A Synthesis of Results and Policy/Management Implications” was accepted for publication in *Ecological Applications*. The paper characterizes research conducted to assess carbon dynamics and the relative influence of changing environmental driving factors on carbon balance in wetland ecosystems of Alaska. (5/1/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Heightened Immune System Function in Polar Bears Using Terrestrial Habitats?” was accepted for publication in *Physiological and Biochemical Zoology*. The study tested whether southern Beaufort Sea polar bears on shore, during summer, exhibited greater immune system activity than bears remaining on sea ice. Polar bears of the southern Beaufort Sea (SBS) subpopulation are spending increasing periods on land during the summer, potentially exposing them to pathogens that are largely absent to sea ice-summering bears. Data suggest that polar bears in the SBS experience greater infections in terrestrial habitat than on the sea ice. As more bears spend longer periods on shore, this trend has the potential to increase disease risk in the SBS as well as other subpopulations. This work was supported by USGS, University of Wyoming, University of Washington, and Polar Bears International. Analyses were conducted and data were produced by University of Wyoming. The data in the paper are publicly archived by the National Center for Atmospheric Research as required by NSF. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A paper entitled “Variation in inbreeding rates across the range of Northern Spotted Owls (*Strix occidentalis caurina*): insights from over 30 years of monitoring data” was accepted for publication in *The Auk: Ornithological Advances*. USGS and partners developed a framework to infer inbreeding rates of Northern Spotted Owls when incomplete parentage information exists. They used over 30 years of monitoring data from 14187 Northern Spotted Owls to estimate inbreeding rates and identify common forms of inbreeding. They also show that there is strong natural selection against inbred Northern Spotted Owls. Authors comment on the primary threats to Northern Spotted Owls and discuss how inbreeding could further affect specific populations in Washington, Oregon, and California and discuss situations where translocations may benefit specific populations of Northern Spotted Owls that are experiencing relatively high rates of inbreeding. Partners include USFS, Oregon Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Green Diamond Resource Company, USDA-APHIS, National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, NPS, Hoopa Valley Tribal Forestry, Raedeke Associates; Funding provided by Sierra Pacific Industries, Inc., the USDI USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, the USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Weyerhaeuser Company, Hancock Forest Management, and USDI National Park Service. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A paper entitled “Geographic variation in natal dispersal of Northern Spotted Owls over 28 years” was accepted for publication in *The Condor*. USGS and U.S. Forest Service researchers analyzed northern spotted owl dispersal distance from natal site to first breeding site, during 1985–2012 in Oregon and Washington to examine how barred owls affect northern spotted owls’ movement. Their objectives were to: (1) determine net natal dispersal distances relative to geographic region and time; (2) determine directional movements of natal dispersal relative to geographic region, year, and sex; (3) describe patterns of natal dispersal relative to barred owl presence; (4) evaluate variation in age at first breeding relative to geographic region and dispersal distance; and (5) examine patterns of long-distance natal dispersal. Their findings could provide insight into understanding the relationships between barred owls, habitat loss or fragmentation, and the role of long-distance dispersal of northern spotted owls. Partners include USDA Forest Service; Collaborators – USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Weyerhaeuser Company, Hancock Forest Management, and USDI National Park Service; Funding – Sierra Pacific Industries, Inc. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A paper entitled, “Trout in hot water: a call for global action” is pending publication in *Science (Letters)*. USGS and partners with Trout Unlimited and the Illinois Natural History Survey describe the global conservation status of freshwater trout and char species as of 2018. Approximately 75% of trout species that have been assessed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature are now threatened with global extinction due to numerous human activities. However, 48% of extant species have not been assessed or lack sufficient data to determine their global conservation status. Reversing these declines will require better understanding current taxonomic diversity and implementing progressive conservation efforts to protect native trout diversity and ameliorate ongoing and future threats at local and global scales. (05/02/18)

[*NEW*] A paper entitled, “Rapid Departure of Roseate Terns (*Sterna dougallii*) following large-scale nest failure” was accepted in *Wilson Journal of Ornithology*. Large-scale nest failure by endangered Roseate Terns in two years at a colony site on the Falkner Island, CT unit of the USFWS’s McKinney National Wildlife Refuge was followed by the departure of about 75% of those individuals within two days of failure. Terns that left this site before the end of June had sufficient time to renest at another colony site in the same year, or they may have moved and spent time nearby areas that now have operational or permitted offshore wind energy facilities. Terns that were able to renest successfully at another colony site could have shown reduced fidelity to the Falkner Island site in subsequent years, and this may have impacted the overall metapopulation dynamics of the regional breeding population. (05/02/18)

[*NEW*] This summer a new USGS article entitled “Hunting for the legacy of landslides from Cascadia's great earthquakes” will be published in the journal *Eos*. The article describes the USGS-hosted, multi-agency Cascadia Earthquake Landslides Working Group and related research efforts to understand the landslide hazards resulting from magnitude-9 earthquakes in subduction zones. The prospect of a great earthquake along Cascadia and its effect on the terrestrial landscape has recently garnered substantial scientific and societal interest. The linkages between subduction zone earthquakes and landslide hazards, however, remain great unknowns. Aligning research interests between the USGS Cascadia Recurrence project, academic groups, and state agencies prompted the formation of the Cascadia Earthquake Landslides Working Group, which held a workshop in 2017 to coordinate research efforts related to coseismic landslides in Cascadia. This new article is a culmination of the Working Group's efforts in laying a methodological groundwork to use the archive of landslides preserved in the landscape as a gauge for strong ground motion of past great earthquakes. Partners include the University of Oregon, University of Texas, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Washington Geological Survey and the University of Washington. (5/2/2018)

[*NEW*] In May a new USGS paper entitled “Remote Sensing Analysis of Vegetation at the San Carlos Apache Reservation, AZ and Surrounding Area” will be published in the *Journal of Applied Remote Sensing*. Land managers of the San Carlos Apache Tribe identified a need to obtain an updated vegetation map for better management of forest, woodland and rangelands. Various remote sensing techniques were applied to classify multi-temporal Landsat 8 satellite data, vegetation index, and digital elevation model data. A multi-tiered unsupervised classification generated over 900 classes that were then recoded to one of 16 generalized vegetation/land cover classes using the Southwest Regional Gap Analysis Project (SWReGAP) map as a guide. A supervised classification was also run using field data collected in the SWReGAP project and our field campaign. Field data was gathered and accuracy assessments were generated to compare outputs. Our hypothesis was that a resulting map would update and potentially improve upon the vegetation/land cover class distributions of the older SWReGAP map over the 24,000 km<sup>2</sup> study area. The estimated overall accuracies ranged between 43 - 75%, depending on which method and field dataset was used. The findings demonstrate the complexity of vegetation mapping, the importance of recent, high-quality-field data, and the potential for misleading results when insufficient field data is collected. (5/2/2018)

[*NEW*] In June/July a new USGS paper entitled “Heightened Immune System Function in Polar Bears Using Terrestrial Habitats” will be published in the journal *Physiological and Biochemical*

*Zoology*. Polar bears of the southern Beaufort Sea (SBS) subpopulation are spending increasing periods on land during the summer, potentially exposing them to pathogens that are largely absent to sea ice-summering bears. Until recently, only about 5% of SBS individuals used shore habitats in summer. However, as a result of rapidly-declining summer ice extent, this proportion has grown to about 30% and the time these polar bears spend on land has become prolonged. Data suggest that polar bears in the SBS experience greater infections in terrestrial habitat than on the sea ice. As more bears spend longer periods on shore, this trend has the potential to increase disease risk in the SBS as well as other subpopulations. This work was also supported by the University of Wyoming, University of Washington, and Polar Bears International. Analyses were conducted and data were produced by University of Wyoming. The data in the paper are publicly archived by the National Center for Atmospheric Research as required by NSF. (5/2/2018)

[*NEW*] In May a new USGS paper entitled “Associations between Urban Sprawl and Life Expectancy in the United States” will be published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. One of the most rapid and continuing changes in land cover is urbanization. It has been shown that the form of urbanization, especially the degree of sprawl, has many adverse consequences. Recent correlational studies have shown reduced human life expectancy in more highly sprawling urban areas. This study evaluates several potential pathways whereby sprawl might reduce longevity, including reduced air quality, increased miles driven, increased obesity, and increased crime rates. After controlling for sociodemographic characteristics, this study found that life expectancy was significantly higher in compact counties than in sprawling counties. Results may help our ability to use compact urban design principles to enhance life spans. Partners include the University of Texas at Arlington, Utah State University, and the National Cancer Institute. (5/2/2018)

[*NEW*] A paper entitled, “Assessment of two external transmitter attachments for *Boiga irregularis* (Brown Treesnakes)” will be published in *Herpetological Review*. The goal of the investigation was to identify the least intrusive method of monitoring arboreal, tropical snakes for studies lasting no more than a month. To do this the scientists tested two methods of attaching temporary radio transmitters to the tails of brown treesnakes using glue and tape. The method that resulted in zero abrasion-related injuries to the snakes was concluded to be the more viable and non-intrusive method for attaching short-term radio transmitters to arboreal, tropical snakes. (5/2/2018)

# Conversation Contents

## Weekly Report to the Secretary, May 6-12

### Attachments:

/62. Weekly Report to the Secretary, May 6-12/1.1 Weekly Report to the Secretary May 6-12.docx

**"Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>**

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**Sent:** Fri May 04 2018 13:00:58 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
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**Subject:**

Weekly Report to the Secretary, May 6-12

**Attachments:**

Weekly Report to the Secretary May 6-12.docx

All,

Attached is this week's report to the Secretary in both Word and Google Doc formats.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Matthew Dermody  
Special Assistant  
Office of the Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
202-513-7778

 [Weekly Report to the Secretary May 6-12.docx](#)



**WEEKLY REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
MAY 6-12, 2018**

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt will be on official travel from May 8-11 in Sacramento, CA.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Todd Willens will be in the office all week.

**Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

No updates to report.

**15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

No updates to report.

**Awareness**

No updates to report.

**OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Congressional Hearings, and Travel**

Nothing to report.

**Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

**NEW CASES:**

Nothing significant to report.

**SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:**

*Dine CARE v. Zinke (D.N.M.)*

On April 23, the court issued decision dismissing all of Plaintiff's claims against the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with prejudice. Plaintiff challenged the BLM's compliance with NEPA and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) for over 300 Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) in the BLM's Farmington Field Office in New Mexico. Previously, on March 31, 2018, the court had issued a brief order stating that it planned to deny Plaintiff's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) claims and grant in part the NHPA claims. But in a 132-page

opinion, the judge changed his mind and held that the BLM had indeed complied with NEPA and, with respect to NHPA, that the BLM's "record documentation for these archaeological sites meets the low bar that the documentation standard erects."

*Public Service Company of New Mexico v. Barboan, et al.* (U.S. Supreme Court)

The U.S. Supreme Court, on April 30, denied the Public Service Company of New Mexico's (PNM) petition for *certiorari* seeking review of a Tenth Circuit decision. The Tenth Circuit Court previously affirmed a decision of the District Court of New Mexico dismissing a condemnation action pursued by PNM against two Navajo allotments in which the Navajo Nation (Nation) had acquired fractional interests through escheat and the Land Buy-Back Program. The 10th Circuit Court determined that 25 U.S.C. § 357 does not permit the condemnation of tribal interests; as such, it was proper for the lower court to dismiss the condemnation action against allotments in which the Nation owned fractional interests. Moreover, the Court, in a footnote, provided that condemnation could not be pursued against individually-owned interests in an allotment while a company simultaneously or previously negotiated a right-of-way from a tribe over its fractional interests. The Tenth Circuit relied upon the plain text of 25 U.S.C. § 357, the Indian law canons of construction, and the Eighth Circuit's 34 year old decision in *Nebraska Public Power District v. 100.95 Acres of Land in Thurston County*, 719 F.2d 956 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1983).

*06 Livestock Company, et al.* (2018)

The Interior Board of Land Appeals (Board) affirmed BLM's grazing decisions on summary judgment because Appellants failed to show disputed issues of material fact. Opinion confirms that not all grazing appeals require a trial-like hearing. In upholding BLM's use of appendices, tiering, and incorporation of reference in its NEPA document, the Board also affirmed principles and tools integral to Departmental NEPA streamlining objectives. Finally, the Board affirmed BLM's broad discretion to manage grazing privileges, including BLM's discretion to manage lands at the allotment scale as opposed to at the pasture scale.

*Simmons v. Smith* (8th Cir.) - Niobrara National Scenic River Boundary Litigation

On April 30, the 8th Circuit found that the NPS property designated a boundary for the Niobrara National Scenic River. Appellant challenged the 2007 boundary delineation that occurred on his property, arguing that the NPS utilized an improper legal standard for the designation. Appellant also alleged that he was subject to disparate treatment and that NPS acted in bad faith when it identified the boundary on his property. The court rejected all of Appellant's claims.

*WildEarth Guardians v. BLM* (D. Colo.) - Clean Air Act Challenge to Oil and Gas Leasing

BLM's Decisions Affirmed. Plaintiff asserted that BLM violated the Clean Air Act (CAA) in two 2015 oil and gas lease sale decisions, because certain parcels are located in an ozone nonattainment area, and BLM had declined to perform a full determination of conformity with the State Implementation Plan (SIP) before authorizing leasing. EPA's conformity rule requires agencies to perform a conformity analysis if the total of direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect emissions from the proposed action would exceed a specific threshold (100 tons per year for ozone precursors). BLM had concluded that a conformity analysis was not required because future emissions of ozone precursors potentially resulting from the lease sales were too uncertain to be considered "reasonably foreseeable." The court affirmed BLM's decisions, concluding that

plaintiff “ha[d] not carried its burden to show that BLM acted arbitrarily or capriciously in determining that the information in its possession was insufficient to permit it to make a reasonable forecast of indirect emissions” for purposes of evaluating whether a conformity determination was required.

## **OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:**

Challenges to Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante NM modifications (D.D.C.)

On April 30, three Utah counties (San Juan County, Garfield County, and Kane County) filed motions to intervene as defendants in the three cases challenging President Trump's modifications to Bears Ears National Monument and the two cases challenging President Trump's modifications to Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. DOJ has requested that the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture indicate the position they intend to take on the motions.

*San Juan Citizens Alliance v. BLM* (D. Colo.) – Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Litigation  
On April 26, Plaintiffs filed a cross-motion for summary judgment against the BLM, arguing that (1) BLM violated FOIA by failing to conduct a reasonable search for documents; (2) the BLM employees, Office of the Solicitor attorney, and DOJ attorney should be held in contempt for failing to disclose that certain categories of documents did not exist in response to Plaintiff's FOIA; (3) the BLM unlawfully withheld documents responsive to FOIA.

*Clean Air Council v. U.S.* (E.D. Pa.) - Climate Change

The court has ordered the United States to reply to plaintiff's opposition to our motion to dismiss by May 3. The reply will address Plaintiffs' allegations of state-caused endangerment and deprivation of life, liberty and property. Plaintiffs in this case are an environmental group and two children. The case is similar to the *Juliana* case in the District of Oregon in that Plaintiffs in this case allege that the deregulatory policies of the Administration violate supposed constitutional rights and the public trust doctrine.

*Friends of Etna Turpentine Camp, Inc. v. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Department of the Interior* (M.D. Fla.)

Plaintiff filed a complaint in December 2017, in the District Court seeking injunctive relief for the FWS' failure to respond with the statutory time limit under the FOIA. Plaintiff sought documents regarding the Suncoast Parkway II, Etna Turpentine Camp, the effect the parkway would have on species in the right of way of the proposed toll road and Biological Opinions regarding the applied for permit by the Florida Department of Transportation. The Etna Turpentine Camp was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2009. The FWS has provided a response to Plaintiff's request and has provided all releasable documents.

*Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Inc. v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)* (N.D. Ala.)

Plaintiffs filed this amended complaint September 13, 2017, challenging the Corps' issuance of a Section 404 permit for Black Creek Mine, located on tributaries of the Black Warrior River in Jefferson County, Alabama, including the Corps' consultation with FWS under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). On April 4, the United States filed its response to Plaintiffs' motion for summary judgment. In response to Plaintiffs' claim that the informal consultation process was

not completed because of the Service's concurrence with the Corps' "not likely to adversely affect" determination specifically mentioned only the conclusion as to listed species, and did not mention critical habitat, the United States countered that because the letter did not include an express nonconcurrence as to critical habitat, the FWS clearly intended to concur with the Corps' finding, and the omission (which was inadvertent) had no substantive impact on the outcome of the consultation. Plaintiffs' response, filed April 25, argues that whether or not the omission was inadvertent, the failure to complete consultation was a violation of the ESA. The United States' reply is due May 16.

*Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town v. Interior* (10<sup>th</sup> Cir.)

Moot court for oral argument will be May 10. Argument is scheduled for May 15.

*Williams, et al. v. United States* (S.D. Miss.)

Plaintiffs filed a lawsuit pursuant to the FTCA in the Southern District of Mississippi, seeking personal injury and property damages totaling \$13,699,036. Plaintiffs allege that a National Park Service Ranger was negligent in making a U-turn to follow a vehicle that committed a traffic infraction resulting in a vehicle accident that seriously injured Mr. and Mrs. Williams and their two children. The United States' Answer is due June 9, 2018.

*Sturgeon v. Frost* (Supreme Court)

The United States' response to Plaintiff's certiorari petition is due May 7. At issue is a Ninth Circuit decision affirming National Park Service's (NPS's) authority to regulate hovercraft use on certain waters within Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Conservation System Units in Alaska. Citing the *Katie John* precedent, the Ninth Circuit held that the United States has an implied reservation of water rights in the Nation River, rendering it "public lands" for purposes of ANILCA.

*James Lee Williams v. United States*, No. 18-1689 (Fed. Cir.)

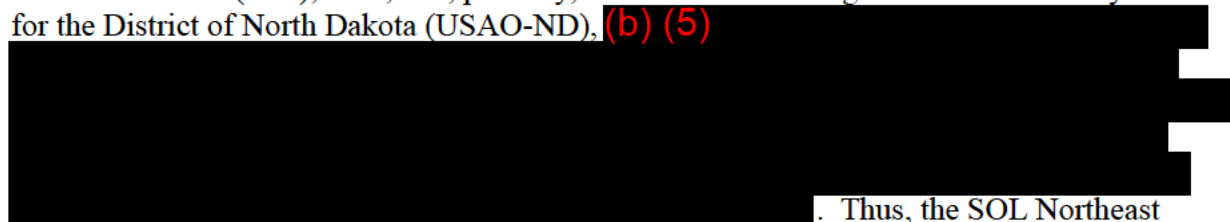
In May 2017, James Lee Williams filed a complaint against the United States, claiming that the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and BLM, among other non-federal defendants, violated his constitutional rights by denying him the right to acquire land and water rights on an area of land in the Colorado River known as Yuma Island. Mr. Williams is seeking \$25 million in damages. The court granted the United States' motion to dismiss, and closed the case on January 31. On March 12, Plaintiff filed a notice of appeal in the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Plaintiff's opening brief is due April 27, and the United States' responsive brief is due on May 4.

*United States v. Uinta Valley Shoshone Tribe* (D. Utah)

In October 2017, the United States Attorneys' Office, upon consultation with the Solicitor's Office (SOL), filed a criminal complaint against a group self-described as the "Uinta Valley Shoshone Tribe" and three of its officers seeking an injunction to prevent the Defendants from selling fraudulent hunting and fishing licenses. The licenses purportedly allow the holders to harvest wildlife on land held in trust for the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. The Uinta Valley Shoshone Tribe is not a federally recognized tribe and has no regulatory authority within the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. The United States alleges wire fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343. On April 30, the parties submitted cross-motions for summary judgment.

*State of North Dakota v. Chase Iron Eyes* (North Dakota District Court, Morton County)

The State of North Dakota has charged Chase Iron Eyes with inciting a riot and trespass related to his activity at the Dakota Access Pipe Line protest. Mr. Iron Eyes is one of 32 defendants in this criminal prosecution. Mr. Iron Eyes' defense team has served at least 18 subpoena *duces tecum* on federal law enforcement agencies that were present at the protest including the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), NPS, and, possibly, the FWS. According to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of North Dakota (USAO-ND), (b) (5)



. Thus, the SOL Northeast Region (NER) has been facilitating communications among SOL Divisions of General Law (DGL), Indian Affairs (DIA), and Parks and Wildlife (DPW), and USAO-ND to assure a consistent DOI response to these subpoenas.

*Turner v. USFWS* (S.D. Ill.)

On April 13, the Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a motion to dismiss (MTD) the complaint of Seth Turner under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP) 12(b)(1) for failure to state a claim related to issuance of the incidental take permit by the FWS for take associated with operation of the Pioneer Trail Wind Farm. Mr. Turner, a spelunker, alleges he was harmed when the FWS approved mitigation credit for cave gating of Griffith Cave, a cave located on private property, under ESA Section 10. Should the court fail to grant the FWS' motion, the DOJ has further alleged that Mr. Turner's 500 paragraph, 88 page complaint violates FRCP 8, and requests that the Court require the pro-se litigant to shorten the length of his complaint.

*In re Waters of the Klamath River Basin*, (Klamath Co. Cir. Ct.) - Water Rights Adjudication Involving Water Rights for the Klamath Tribes and the FWS

On April 27, the County Circuit Court issued a case management order setting out the scheduling for resolving exceptions. The adjudication has been broken down into Phases 1-3. Phase 1 dealt with procedural issues and Phase 2 deals with minor errors. Phase 3 deals with the merits, resolving the exceptions that parties have filed to the Oregon Water Resource Department's determinations on water rights claims. The Court broke Phase 3 into two parts. In Part 1, the parties will resolve various cross-cutting legal issues. In Part 2, remaining exceptions will be resolved. In the April 27 order, the court broke Phase 3, Part 1 into three groups for briefing: (1) pre-1909 and non-tribal federal reserved water rights, (2) Walton and Klamath Termination Act rights, and (3) tribal reserved water rights. He set out a briefing schedule only for the first group, with Exceptors' opening motions due August 3; responses in support of Exceptors due August 24; responses in opposition to Exceptors due November 16; replies due January 18, 2019; and oral argument set for February 26-28, 2019. This first group of Phase 1, Part 1 will involve BOR and FWS water rights claims.

*National Wildlife Federation, et al. v. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), et al.* (D. Or.)  
- "FCRPS BiOp Litigation"

On April 17, the court amended its 2016 remand order to eliminate the requirement that NMFS issue a new biological opinion by December 31. The court extended the deadline for a new biological opinion to March 26, 2021, to coincide with completion of the ongoing NEPA analysis. The court invited motions for further relief to govern interim operations in the event that NMFS does not issue a biological opinion by the expiration of the current opinion on December 31.

*Allen, et al. v. U.S.* (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.)

Appellants' Opening Brief was filed on April 20, challenging an Order Denying Plaintiffs' Motion for Summary Judgment (MSJ) and Granting Defendants MSJ issued in District Court on November 27, 2017. Appellants Ukiah Valley Indians of Pinoleville, who are or were part of the Pinoleville Tribe residing on the Reservation, sought to organize as a separate half-blood tribe under the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). In January 2015, a Ninth Circuit Settlement Agreement in *Allen v. US*, Case No. 12-16573, mandated DOI decide Appellants' eligibility to organize a separate tribe, and the AS-IA authorized the Pacific Regional Director (RD) to issue a final decision. On April 1, 2016, the RD found Appellants ineligible to organize a half-blood tribe because they are among individuals for whom the Reservation was established, noting they or their ancestors participated in organizing the Tribe and are thus ineligible to create a half-blood tribe consistent with definitions of "tribe" as an organized group residing on one reservation. 25 U.S.C. § 479; 25 C.F.R. § 81.1(w)(2).

*Upper Lake Pomo Association, et al. v. Cecil Andrus, et al.* (N.D. Cal.)

On April 13, a Motion to Hold Defendants in Contempt of the Order Granting Plaintiffs' Motion for Partial Summary Judgment was filed on behalf of the daughter of decedent Amerdine Jackson, who was a member of the Habemotolel Pomo of Upper Lake (Tribe). The Tribe was restored to federal recognition pursuant to the *Andrus* litigation, which provides that lands previously owned by Indians and Indian Tribes shall or may be taken into trust. Plaintiff claims the Order mandates that BIA acquire her Mother's property in trust, but probate has not been completed and is stalled because a deed purporting to transfer the land to the United States in trust was recorded by Ms. Jackson with the County in 1998, although it was never approved by BIA. The State probate court apparently concluded it does not have jurisdiction, so BIA executed a Notice of Non-Acceptance of Recorded Deed, but it is unclear if this was filed with the probate court. Our response is due May 4.

*United States v. Estate of E. Wayne Hage* (D. Nev.)

Following the oral argument on April 13, when the Ninth Circuit panel got sidetracked by Hage's (inaccurate) statement that the federal agencies have denied his request to divert his water rights, for an appeal limited to damages assessed for his trespass grazing, DOJ filed a supplemental letter with the Ninth Circuit on April 25, with documentation rebutting Hage's inaccurate claims. On April 26, the Ninth Circuit issued an Order withdrawing the appeal from submission and referring it to a Senior Circuit Judge to serve as a mediator and explore whether the parties wish to mediate the matter. The order to mediate was not unexpected in light of comments made by the Ninth Circuit panel at oral argument in response to Hage's misleading assertions about federal agency actions regarding diversion of the Hage Estate's water rights.

## **NON-LITIGATION MATTERS:**

### The Semiquincentennial Commission

The Semiquincentennial Commission is a 33 member independent commission with 24 voting members (including members of Congress and private citizens) and 9 non-voting ex official members (Including the Secretary of the Interior and other Federal Government officials) charged with planning activities and events to celebrate the nation's 250th birthday on July 4, 2026. The Act directs the Secretary to enter into an arrangement with a nonprofit organization to perform administrative, financial and procurement functions for the Commission. The National Parks Branch is coordinating with General Law and the Ethics office to identify any legal or ethics issues relating to the Commission and provide legal advice regarding the agreement with the nonprofit and for the Commission moving forward.

### Implementation of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement

Under procedures developed by the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office (SIWRO), Division of Water Resources (DWR) provides support in the implementation of this recently enacted settlement, including drafting various documents necessary for the Secretary's execution of the settlement agreement and related documents. As part of this process, the Solicitor's Office requests formal concurrence from the Department of Justice in our view that (b) (5)

■ (b) (5)  
Meanwhile, DWR will provide a draft recommendation from SOL to the Secretary to the Front Office for review and finalization. SIWRO advises that a signing ceremony may be scheduled for mid-May and wants to expedite a final package through SOL and Executive Secretariat for surnaming by all relevant bureaus.

### Wisteria Island Title Dispute

DLR is finalizing a draft letter regarding affirmative litigation for Front Office review. The letter will be submitted within the next few weeks.

### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Lease Sale 251

DMR has completed review of the Final Notice of Sale (FNOS) for Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lease Sale 251, scheduled for August 15. It is now with the front office for surname. Full Departmental clearance and publication of the FNOS is required before July 15, to hold the sale as scheduled.

### BOEM National OCS Leasing Program

On May 4, BOEM is briefing the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management (ASLMM) on how Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions will be analyzed in the 2019-2024 Oil and Gas Program (2019-2024 Program). DMR has provided advice to BOEM and will be participating in that briefing.

### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) Production Safety Systems Rule

On April 26, OMB communicated a determination that it will treat the rule as significant, triggering a 60-day interagency review. The Solicitor's Office is working with the BSEE to complete the review process for the preamble, rule text, regulatory impact analysis, and environmental assessment, so that the Department can share final versions with OMB.



#### BSEE Well Control Rule Proposed Revisions

On April 27, BSEE transmitted to the Office of the Federal Register for publication a notice of proposed rulemaking proposing to modify elements of the regulations promulgated through the 2016 Final Well Control Rule.

#### OCS Renewables Safety Jurisdiction

DMR met with supervisory legal counsel at the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) on May 1 to discuss the question of (b) (5)

. DMR briefed the BSEE Director on the issue on April 26.

#### Enforcement of Demand Letter

A Knoxville attorney is providing legal advice to the Eastern Regional of BIA as the agency assists the Catawba Tribe to recover approximately \$18,000.00 in damages to timber on the trust lands of the Catawba Indian Reservation. The trespass occurred in 2016. The trespassers are believed to be both tribal and non-tribal individuals.

#### Mountain Valley Pipeline

- Protests: One protester abandoned a “tree sit” on federal lands, and the tree stand has been dismantled. Two protesters remain encamped in trees, blocking necessary tree clearing and construction activities. The U.S. Forest Service (FS) made multiple arrests this week as protest support teams attempted to resupply the protesters in violation of the FS’ closure order for the area. Protesters have erected five other tree sits on private lands.

- Variance request: On April 23, after consulting with SOL, BLM signed a variance authorizing Mountain Valley Pipeline to clear trees after a March 31 tree clearing deadline. Mountain Valley Pipeline had agreed to the March 31 deadline in order to provide additional protective measures for migratory birds. In support of the variance request, Mountain Valley Pipeline's attorneys attached M-37050 ("The Migratory Bird Treaty Act Does Not Prohibit Incidental Take"), agreed to conduct avian surveys before tree clearing, and transmitted comments of the FWS determining that the proposed tree clearing would not require re-initiation of consultation. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) ultimately approved the variance after considering the signatures and views of the other Federal agencies.

- Notice to proceed: On April 23, after consulting with SOL, BLM issued a notice to proceed with road widening and vegetation removal on access roads.

#### National Park Service, Fort Donelson National Battlefield, Visitor’s Center Design and Build Renovation Project. (Update as of April 24)

The National Park Service entered into a firm-fixed price design and build contract with KHDM Construction LLC, an (8)(a) small business contractor, to renovate Fort Donelson Visitor’s Center in Dover, Tennessee. The contract value is \$965,212.00. The period of performance date was September 2016; however, the project has not been completed due, in part, to a breakdown in negotiations for additional costs associated with completing the project. The project delay has caught local media attention. NPS requested a revised cost proposal to complete the project;



however, the contractor failed to respond to the NPS' request. The contractor has also been unresponsive to the contracting officer's recent attempts to reach the contractor by phone and email. The SOL advised the Bureau Procurement Chief and Lead Contracting Officer on Termination for Default procedures and assisted with coordinating concurrence with Small Business Administration (SBA). After consulting with SOL, the Contracting Officer has determined that terminating the contract for default is in the best interest of the Government. SOL has reviewed the required Termination for Default Notice to the contractor for legal sufficiency and will continue to provide advice and guidance throughout the re-procurement process.

**NPS Bike Sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Arlington County**  
The Parks Branch advised the NPS on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NPS (acting through the Superintendent of the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP)) and Arlington County, Virginia, concerning the implementation of the regional bike sharing system in the Arlington County portion of GWMP. The NPS and Arlington County currently intend to establish bike sharing stations on NPS-administered property at Theodore Roosevelt Island, Gravelly Point, and the Marine Corps War Memorial. The MOU will be signed in the near future.

**Meeting held on April 20 to discuss the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument**  
The City of Birmingham and the Federal Government are co-owners of the A.G. Gaston Motel (Gaston Motel), the cornerstone land improvement for the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument (BICR). The plan is to renovate the Gaston Motel, using initial funding provided by the City of Birmingham. Preparatory matters to that end are proceeding under a Framework Agreement, and the plan is to transition operations under a more detailed Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA). Earlier work on the final draft CMA was suspended in order to allow the new leadership for the City of Birmingham to review of draft CMA agreement and to otherwise become more familiar with the BICR. On April 20, representatives from the SOL Southeast Region (SER), met with the Chief Assistant City Attorney for the City of Birmingham, and several senior staff at the SE Regional Office of the NPS to discuss the current state of affairs for BICR and the final draft CMA. While the April 20, meeting was very productive, it was determined that there were a number of outstanding matters that needed to be addressed before the draft final CMA was ready for legal review.

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park - Gatlinburg Fires - Administrative Tort Claims**  
On April 24, the Torts Practice Branch received 241 additional administrative claims in excess of 75 million dollars, which relate to the November 2016 Chimney Tops 2 fires in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and surrounding areas. Claimants assert the Park's fire suppression efforts were negligent and it failed to follow required protocols. These additional claims bring the total number of administrative claims filed to date to more than 440. Combined, the claim amounts exceed \$2 billion dollars.

From April 23 - 25, Tort Practice Branch lead attorneys participated in witness interviews and briefings by the Great Smokey Mountains NPS leadership and staff regarding the 2016 Chimney Tops 2 fires in the Great Smokey Mountains and surrounding areas. Fourteen people died and hundreds were injured. Moreover more than 2,400 houses and structures were damaged or


destroyed by the fire. To date, more than 440 administrative tort claims have been filed and the total claim amount exceeds \$2 billion dollars.

*Or. Natural Desert Ass'n v. Jewell* (9th Cir. Oct. 20, 2016); *Or. Natural Desert Ass'n v. Zinke* (D. Or. Apr. 18, 2017)

Proposed attorneys' fees settlement in Steens Wind case. Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) fee settlement recommendation memorandum will be submitted for Front Office review after BLM has completed its review and briefing.

#### California WaterFix (CWF)

Cases in chief for the protestants before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) water right hearing for CWF, Part 2, closed on Wednesday, April 25, 2018. Parties to the hearing now await a ruling from the SWRCB on a rebuttal schedule. CVP contractors and Reclamation are preparing for the CWF to be a State-only project, with only minimal use by the CVP, or its contractors. Because a State-only CWF may have impacts to the water supply of the CVP, Reclamation is beginning to build an accounting model in CalSimII to account for a State-only operated CWF. This will include outreach to CVP contractor (and CWF protestant) modelers, as well as modelers for Metropolitan Water District (MWD), the State Water Contractors (SWC), and the California Division of Water Resources (CDWR). (b) (5)



#### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Significant Litigation Deadlines are reported separately.

#### **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS**

##### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On May 8, Susan Combs, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, will be at the Continuity of Operations Procedures Exercise.

On May 7-9, Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith will be making a site visit to Jackson, Mississippi.

On May 8, Deputy Assistant Secretary Ryan Hambleton will be at the Continuity of Operations Procedures Exercise.

From May 4-7, FWS Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan will be on leave.

From May 6-7, NPS Deputy Director Dan Smith will be in the office. On May 8, Dan will be at the Continuity of Operations Procedures Exercise. On May 9, he will be back in the office.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**[NEW]** From May 2-31, the Federal Aviation Administration and FWS will seek public comments on the draft environmental assessment for repair and replacement of damaged sections of a seawall at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial. The seawall protects the southern portion of Sand Island and Henderson Airfield's runway from erosion. Henderson Airfield is an emergency landing site for transpacific commercial flights. This action is non-controversial. Outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, with targeted stakeholder outreach. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The week of May 6, FWS will announce updated eagle priors and seek comment on several options for applying them. "Priors" are inputs for the collision risk model (CRM) FWS uses to estimate eagle fatalities at wind energy facilities. In the 2016 final rule revising the eagle incidental take permit regulations, FWS committed to update the golden eagle priors and explore whether sufficient data exist to develop separate bald eagle exposure and collision priors. The revised priors incorporate much more data than the original priors; enough to create species-specific priors. The updated collision prior is slightly lower than the current prior for golden eagles and higher for bald eagles. No outreach is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. 05/02/2018

On May 8, FWS Northeast Regional Director Wendi Weber will give a keynote address at the 36th Annual National Native American Fish and Wildlife Society Conference. This year's conference is hosted by the Narragansett Tribe and is being held in Providence, Rhode Island. FWS will provide presentations on coastal resilience projects in Rhode Island, eagle policy and permitting, white-nose syndrome in bats, and a possible field trip to the Rhode Island NWR complex. (04/11/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 8 and 10, public meetings are scheduled to discuss the Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct a 30-day public scoping period and prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Skookumchuck Wind Energy Project Habitat Conservation Plan in Washington. On or around May 3, FWS expects publication in the *Federal Register* of the NOI. The FWS will be preparing an EIS to evaluate the issuance of an Incidental Take Permit for marbled murrelet, bald eagle, and golden eagle for a proposed wind energy project in Lewis County, Washington. The project is expected to be controversial with conservation organizations (e.g., American Bird Conservancy, Audubon Society, and Washington Forest Law Center). FWS has received two Freedom of Information Act requests related to the project. A communications plan has been shared with FWS HQ; outreach announcing the public scoping period is planned for Washington media, congressional offices, local and state officials, tribes, and stakeholders. (Updated 05/02/2018)

[UPDATE] FWS has granted a two-week extension and the comment period for the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed development of the Crocker Wind Farm in Clark County, South Dakota. It will now close on May 8. We had a request from local citizens to extend the comment period, Geronimo Energy, the developers for the Crocker Wind Farm, is interested in expeditiously moving the process along, however tribal consultation will not take place until mid-May, 2018. FWS issued a press release regarding the extension on April 23. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around May 15, FWS will publish a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2019-20 hunting season. This is the first step in the annual regulatory cycle. The FWS Regulations Committee will recommend the final frameworks at their October meeting. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

[UPDATE] In early May, pending clearance by DOI, FWS will make a final determination on the proposal to reclassify the Tobusch fishhook cactus from endangered to threatened. This plant species has shown significant recovery due in part to collaborative conservation efforts with partners. Supporters of this action include the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and The Nature Conservancy. FWS has gained positive coverage on downlisting proposals, and anticipates more interest when this final determination is announced. A communications plan has been developed. It includes outreach to congressional offices, local and state officials and stakeholders. A news release to media and posting information on social media is planned at time of publication in the *Federal Register*. (Updated 05/02/2018)

### National Park Service

In early May, the NPS plans to release a prospectus for five concession contracts to provide cruise ship services at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Two of the contracts are set aside for the two historic operators identified through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). Cruise ship services contracts have been awarded since 1980 on a 10 year basis. New contract terms are similar to previous contracts, shaped in accordance with both Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve-specific legislation and NPS law and policy. Contracts will be awarded by late October, 2019. The prospectus is in final Department and Solicitor review. (Updated 04/11/18).

On May 6, Yosemite National Park will complete a pilot traffic management program aimed at increasing safety and minimizing long lines at the Arch Rock Entrance Station on California Route 140. The park is working with the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to temporarily stop vehicles on the road leading to the park, allowing traffic to incrementally enter the park on the popular road. This is one of the pilot programs the park is implementing to address traffic congestion, ensure visitor access, and address safety concerns for park visitors. (Updated 04/25/18)

**[NEW]** On or about May 7, Saguaro National Park will initiate a two week public comment period for an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze impacts of the continued traditional harvesting of Saguaro Fruit and Cholla Buds by the Tohono O'odham Nation within Park boundaries. This EA is a requirement of the August 2016 NPS rule, Gathering of Certain Plants by Federally Recognized Indian Tribes for Traditional Purposes (36 CFR 2.6), to establish a management framework for tribes to gather certain plant parts within NPS units for traditional purposes. The harvesting of Saguaro Fruit and Cholla Buds is a long standing tradition of the tribal members. (05/02/2018)

Between May 7 - 10, an NPS planning team will host several public meetings throughout the State of Mississippi as part of the civic engagement phase of a special resource study (SRS) looking at significant civil rights sites in Mississippi, including locations related to the life and murder of Medgar Evers, the lynching of Emmett Till and the murder of three freedom riders. The team will visit five different communities across the state containing resources that were identified in the legislation requiring the SRS. The study will evaluate the potential for inclusion of each site in the national park system based on whether it meets Congressionally-established criteria for significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management. Representatives from Congressman Bennie Thompson's office and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History are expected to participate in the public meetings. PEPC site: [https://parkplanning.nps.gov/MSCR\\_SRS](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/MSCR_SRS) (04/18/18).

Between May 7 - 25, a spending plan will be developed and submitted to the Department for approval for the new Historic Preservation Fund grant program subgrant program (yet to be named). Five million in physical preservation funding was passed as part of the FY 2018 budget to grant "block grant" funding to organizations that will subgrant funding to historic properties of national, State, and local significance listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Development of a spending plan was mandated in the appropriations language. Preservation partners may have questions about the stage of development of this program. (4/25/2018)

Between May 7 – 25, State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices may apply for the remaining funding from the FY 2018 Annual HPF grants that is noticed on [Grants.gov](https://www.dhs.gov/grants). The application deadline 6/30/18. (Updated 4/25/2018)

During the week of May 7, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area staff are participating in a four-day workshop hosted by BLM to discuss alternatives regarding the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument and Kanab Field Office – Escalante Area Resource Management Plans. On April 10, the park and the BLM held its first cooperating agency meeting. The NPS agreed to be a cooperating agency during this planning effort with Glen Canyon National Recreation Area functioning as the NPS point of contact. Consolidated comments from all involved NPS park units were reviewed by the regional office and sent to the BLM on April 13. (04/18/18)

**[NEW]** On May 8 and 9, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore is hosting two public meetings to solicit feedback related to visitor use management within the westernmost portion of the lakeshore. The public will be invited to comment online between May 8 and June 6, 2018. (05/02/2018)

On May 9, Devils Postpile National Monument will announce the temporary summer closure to camping at its 20-site campground to accommodate expanded day-use. The campground area will be open for parking, picnicking, and provide improved river access for fishing. The monument will be developing a long-term plan for the campground to better meet visitor needs. Campers will be encouraged to use the six U.S. Forest Service campgrounds located in the immediate vicinity of the park. (4/25/2018)

By May 10, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Bonnie Clare Road Reconstruction Environmental Assessment and FONSI. Reconstruction work is scheduled to start in August 2018 and be completed by May 2019. This will allow reopening of the northeast entrance to the park and restore public access to Scotty's Castle after massive damage from flooding in October 2015. [PEPC link](#) (Updated 04/18/18)

By May 10, Death Valley National Park and the Ridgecrest BLM office anticipate opening a public comment period on the Keystone Mine Plan of Operations Amendment and accompanying Environmental Assessment. The mine is on BLM land near the park's western border, but the mining plan includes the use of water rights within the park. (updated 04/18/18).

On May 10-11, the NPS will hold public forums and stakeholder sessions to present the [Savannah National Historic Landmark District Integrity & Assessment](#) report. Public comments on the report are also being accepted through June 30. (04/18/18)

**[NEW]** On or about May 11, the NPS will sign the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for an Environmental Assessment (EA) to construct a garage/maintenance building that will be used for two electric-vehicle shuttle vans at Valles Caldera National Preserve. The preferred alternative will be to construct the garage in an already-disturbed location. The construction project is funded by a grant from the Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. The same grant was also used to purchase the shuttle vans and construct a solar photovoltaic panel system to generate electric power/fuel the vans. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 11, Glacier National Park expects to have a signed Finding of No Significant Impact for the Sperry Chalet Next 100 Years Project. The park expects to issue a press release on May 13 with this update. The EA will identify the NPS' preferred alternative, which is to use existing remnant walls to rebuild the structure, replicating and retaining as many historic character features as is practicable, and achieving some modernization in design. (Updated 05/02/2018)

Between May 10-30, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Scotty's Castle Flood Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment and FONSI. This document analyzes repair work planned for historic structures, the cultural landscape, utilities, parking, and walkways to recover from damage from a flash flood in October 2015. The historic district is scheduled to reopen to the public in 2020. [PEPC link](#) (Updated 04/18/18)

**[NEW]** On May 15, Rock Creek Park will host a public meeting at the Silver Spring Library to share information about the ongoing rehabilitation of Beach Drive. Staff from the Federal

Highway Administration, the DC Department of Transportation, DC Water, and the NPS National Capital Region will discuss the current status and the upcoming work on Segment 4 of the project. Segment 4 is the final part of the project and is expected to be finalized in Fall 2019. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** By May 15, Death Valley National Park and Mojave National Preserve will begin efforts to relocate up to 2,500 feral burros from each park. Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue (a nonprofit partner) will fund and carry out the roundups, test burros for disease, relocate them to holding facilities, and domesticate the animals for adoption. This is anticipated to generate public interest. (Updated 05/02/2018)

By May 15, pending Departmental approval, the NPS will publish a Federal Register notice announcing that the Department has authorized the preparation of a World Heritage nomination for the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio. It is recirculating for surname. With nine component properties including those that form Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, and others managed by the State of Ohio, this series of geometric mounds is approximately 2,000 years old. The nomination file, which will take more than a year to draft, will be developed by local proponents in Ohio with guidance from the NPS. Upon completion and review, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks will determine whether the nomination will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee. (Updated 04/18/18).

On May 15, Rock Creek Park will issue a prospectus and begin accepting proposals from vendors to provide equestrian and related services at the park's horse center in Washington, D.C., under a new 10-year concession contract. Services sought include private horse boarding, therapeutic riding programs, instructional camps, guided trail rides and riding lessons. Contract offers must be received by June 15. (04/11/18).

On May 15-16, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council will hold a public meeting in Jamestown, Virginia. This will be the Council's final meeting since trail advisory councils are only authorized for 10 years under the National Trails System Act. Deputy Director Dan Smith plans to attend the first day. (04/12/18)

By May 18, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) expects to issue the Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Muir Woods National Monument Salmon Habitat Enhancement and Bridge Replacement Project. The selected alternative will restore aquatic habitat degraded by riprap that was placed along the creek banks in the 1930s and replace four deteriorated pedestrian bridges that were installed in the 1990s. The project implements part of the 2014 General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. The projects themselves are not expected to be controversial, but there is public interest in ensuring that NPS schedules its projects to reduce cumulative impacts from planned construction work in the area by the Marin County Department of Public Works and the Federal Highways Works Administration. (Updated 04/25/18)

**[NEW]** Between May 19 - 23, the NPS will participate in the largest travel industry trade show in the country, IPW, in Denver, Colorado. The show focuses on international travel to the United States. The NPS has scheduled appointments with 100+ international tour operators to discuss

outdoor recreation opportunities on park lands, policy, regulatory requirements, fees, and other issues. The NPS participates alongside a team of Federal agencies including DOI, FWS, BLM, BIA, Commerce Department, State Department, that engage with the tourism sector. DOI Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs will also be participating. (05/02/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 20-25, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposed rule and open a 30-day public comment period on the 2018-19 Refuge-Specific Hunting and Sport Fishing Regulations. The proposed rule would open up to 30 various national wildlife refuges to hunting and/or sport fishing for the first time and expand hunting and fishing opportunities at others. Outreach is planned to include a national news release when the *Federal Register* notice is published and notifications to members of Congress in affected districts, with some stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around May 31, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the Colorado butterfly plant due to recovery. This species is located in Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming. This action is not expected to be opposed. Outreach plans include a national news release, and an if-asked FAQs. Key stakeholders include private landowners, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and the BLM. (Updated 04/11/2018)

On or around May 31, FWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) plan to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to revise the regulations pertaining to interagency cooperation pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 402) and the procedures for listing of species and designation of critical habitat pursuant to section 4 of the Act (50 CFR 424). FWS will also propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NMFS' current practice. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. The rules are currently undergoing interagency review through OMB-OIRA. (04/25/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** In late May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to reclassify Kuenzler hedgehog cactus, a plant species endemic to New Mexico, from endangered to threatened. This reclassification is not expected to be controversial. Primary stakeholders include the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service. Planned outreach includes a regional news release, emails to stakeholders, social media, and web postings. (Updated 05/02/18)

***[UPDATE]*** In late May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to delist the Hidden Lake bluecurls, a plant in California, due to recovery. FWS does not expect opposition to the delisting. Primary stakeholders include California Department of Parks and Recreation Mount San Jacinto State Park. Planned outreach will include a national



news release and notifications to stakeholders and members of Congress. A communications plan has been shared with DOI Comms. (Updated 05/02/2018)

[UPDATE] In late May, FWS will send a news release summarizing cross-fostering efforts of Mexican wolf pups to media and stakeholders. Typically FWS will not announce until a successful cross-foster event is completed. Last year, two pups were flown in but the den in the wild could not be located. On April 18, four 10-day old Mexican wolf pups were removed from a captive litter at the Endangered Wolf Center in Eureka, Missouri and flown to Arizona. Two were inserted into a wild wolf pack's den in Arizona, and two were inserted into a wild den in New Mexico. The Interagency Field Team will monitor the recipient packs through the summer to determine the success of these cross-fostering actions. In May, FWS will release another group of pups The Mexican wolf recovery team will only have a very short time (72 - 48 hours) to get a cross-foster mission lined up for execution. Select reporters will be invited to attend the event. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or before June 1, FWS plans to publish in the *Federal Register* the final 2018-19 hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds. FWS annually prescribes frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the number of birds that may be taken and possessed in hunting seasons. These frameworks are necessary to allow state selections of seasons and limits and to allow recreational harvest at levels compatible with population and habitat conditions. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

On or around June 1, the FWS anticipates the draft supplemental environmental impact statement for expanded public access to Rattlesnake Mountain on Hanford Reach National Monument, in Washington state, will be available for public review and comment. This is part of the required regulatory processes to provide public access to Rattlesnake Mountain, consistent with a mandate in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA; P.L. 113-291). Section 3081 of the NDAA states "the Secretary of the Interior shall provide public access to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain for educational, recreational, historical, scientific, cultural, and other purposes, including (1) motor vehicle access; and (2) pedestrian and other non-motorized access." The FWS established a Tribal Working Group with four local tribes and held public scoping meetings to address cultural concerns and to work through the process of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The FWS is addressing National Environmental Policy Act compliance by drafting a supplement to the 2008 Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Monument. Expanded public access will be controversial with tribes. FWS will continue outreach efforts to the tribes, media, and the public. A local news release is planned to alert the public to comment period. (Updated 03/28/2018)

[UPDATE] On or around June 1, pending approval by the Department, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a Notice of Intent to prepare a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) addressing the potential impacts from four similar wind energy project habitat conservation plans in Hawaii. The HCPs were submitted to the Service in support of requests for permits authorizing the take of endangered or threatened species, under the Endangered Species Act. Due to similarities in the geography, impact, covered species, and proposed mitigation measures between these four wind energy projects the Service has determined that a combined

PEIS is the most efficient and comprehensive approach for considering the cumulative impacts of these actions on the human environment. When the PEIS publishes, outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, with targeted stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On June 1 and 2, representatives from FWS, U.S. Forest Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and other partners will celebrate the proposal to delist Kirtland's warbler. The current Kirtland's warbler population is estimated to be over 2,000 pairs, more than double the recovery goal. The Kirtland's warbler population continues to grow and has exceeded recovery goals for the past 16 years. FWS is accepting comments on the proposal through July 11. (04/25/2018)

*[UPDATE]* On or around June 8, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to list five Sri Lankan tarantula species as endangered. The species are in decline due to ongoing habitat loss, degradation, and the cumulative effects of this and other threat factors. This action is not expected to be controversial. Planned outreach will include web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* an action designating critical habitat for three plant species on Hawaii island and is correcting the maps for existing designations for an additional four species. FWS intends to exclude lands owned or managed by the Queen Liliuokalani Trust, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and other private landowners under 4(b)(2) of the Act. This action is not controversial. Interested stakeholders include the state of Hawaii and multiple state agencies, the county of Hawaii and various private landowners. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders mentioned above. (Updated 04/18/2018)

In response to a petition to delist the species, on or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to reclassify the American burying beetle from an endangered species to a threatened species. While the primary threats to the species have been ameliorated, ongoing threats remain. FWS will also propose a rule under section 4(d) tailoring prohibitions to those most likely to harm the American burying beetle and its habitats. The American burying beetle currently occurs in Arkansas, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Texas. This finding will likely be opposed by the Center for Biological Diversity and Center for American burying beetle conservation. It is also likely to be opposed by the petitioners, American Stewards of Liberty, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Dr. Steven W. Carothers, as they petitioned us to delist, not downlist the species. Outreach plans include a regional news release and Congressional notifications. (04/25/2018)

*[UPDATE]* On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed rule to list the hyacinth macaw as threatened. To address concerns raised by the pet trade industry, FWS is including a 4(d) rule that will allow for the import and export of parrots that meet certain criteria, as well as interstate commerce in this species without a permit. Stakeholders include the bird breeding community, Conservation International, The

Nature Conservancy, and World Wildlife Fund. Planned outreach will include a national news release and web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

As early as June, FWS in partnership with Arizona Game and Fish Department will propose expanding the black-footed ferret 10(j) designation to include all current and historical ferret habitat in Arizona. The 1996 Arizona 10(j) area was limited to the Aubrey Valley Experimental Population Area (AVEPA); successful reintroductions and subsequent population expansions has resulted in ferrets venturing outside of the AVEPA (as fully protected status). FWS consultation with affected tribes has been initiated. FWS will coordinate with AGFD to best approach and inform Arizona grassland residents and industry (livestock) groups. Communication planning will be conducted. (04/18/2018)

### National Park Service

By May 20, National Capital Parks-East, via the Federal Highway Administration, will award a contract to repair the roads in Fort Dupont and Fort Davis Parks. This paving project will completely reconstruct the most deteriorated sections and resurface the roads. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton has been interested in the project. Public notifications will begin in the coming weeks and work is expected to begin in summer 2018. (04/04/18).

On May 21, Mount Rainier National Park will issue a news release announcing the availability of the Paradise Cellular Environmental Assessment (EA) Finding of No Significant Impact. The selected action will issue right-of-way permits to Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile, and provide conditional approval of AT&T's proposal to co-locate wireless communication facilities in the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise. The cellular facilities will be concealed in the attic of the visitor center and will not involve the construction of towers. The NPS received 893 comments on the EA, with approximately 70% opposed to the service. Comments opposed to the proposal emphasized the protection of national parks and wildernesses from wireless signals, with many assuming a cell tower would be constructed. Those in favor emphasized safety, and the benefits of improved communication including convenience, coordination, education, and timely notification of hazards. The NPS determined that cellular service at Paradise will benefit the public by improving communication between the NPS and the public, and between park visitors, in the most intensely used and developed district of the park. (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 22, pending an updated wage determination from Department of Labor (DOL), Golden Gate National Recreation Area's General Agreement and associated draft leases for the long-term use of Pier 31 ½ as the Alcatraz ferry embarkation site will be considered by the San Francisco Port Commission for approval. This item was before the commission on February 27; however, commissioners continued the vote in response to concerns raised by labor unions about the concession contract DOL wage determination and other labor-related issues. Concurrently the NPS is working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Sausalito (with notification to Congressman Jared Huffman's office (D-2-CA)) summarizing common understandings related to the potential expansion of ferry passenger service to Fort Baker described in the Alcatraz Island Passenger Ferry Service Prospectus. [Prospectus link](#) (Updated 5/2/2018)

**[NEW]** May 23 is the final day for internal review comments on the Yuma Crossing Quartermaster Depot Reconnaissance Survey. The NPS has prepared this reconnaissance survey at the request of Senator John McCain to evaluate the Yuma Quartermaster Depot in Yuma, Arizona as a potential unit of the National Park System. The purpose of a reconnaissance survey is to provide a preliminary evaluation of a resource and to recommend whether an authorization for a Special Resource Study fully evaluating the resource should be considered by the U.S. Congress. This reconnaissance survey report discusses national significance and presents preliminary findings on suitability, feasibility, and the need for direct NPS management. Additionally, in response to a special request from Senator McCain, the survey also provides a preliminary analysis of the interpretive approach outlined in a master plan prepared by the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area. (5/2/2018)

On May 23, the public comment period will close on Antietam National Battlefield's Visitor Access and Circulation Plan/Environmental Assessment (Plan/EA). The purpose of the Plan/EA is to evaluate the implementation of strategies to improve visitor access and circulation at the park. This Plan/EA also serves as an amendment to the 1992 Antietam National Battlefield General Management Plan, taking into account newly acquired lands not previously considered in the general management plan and evolving management decisions regarding the visitor center and several Battlefield tour roads. <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ANTICirculationPlan> (Updated 04/25/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 25, public comments for the National Mall and Memorial Parks' renewal of two National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits are due to the EPA. The permit for the World War II Memorial allows for stormwater discharge from the memorial pools and fountains into the Tidal Basin; the permit for the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool allows for the discharge of treated water to and from the Tidal Basin. If no substantive comments are received by the EPA (and none are expected), the permits will go into effect by June 24. (05/02/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 26, Lassen Volcanic National Park will close its public comment period on alternatives for a Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA). The plan will provide a comprehensive strategy to ensure the preservation and enhancement of wilderness character in the park's designated wilderness and backcountry areas. The proposed action seeks to maintain unconfined recreational use while identifying and preserving resource values that the public seeks in this setting. (Updated 5/2/2018)

**[NEW]** On or after May 28, the Tule Lake Unit of the WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument will open a 30-day public comment period on the Tule Lake Jail Restoration Project Environmental Assessment. The proposed action would fully restore the exterior of the building, remove the freestanding shed and chain-link fence, restore or rehabilitate the jail interior, and would also improve accessibility to and within the building. (05/02/2018)

On May 29, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a competitive business opportunity to establish a waterfront community center at the Fort Baker Historic Boat Shop and Marina as an affordable recreational and gathering place. The purpose of the RFQ is to identify both private- and public-sector entities interested in operating the facility, which is currently operated by the U.S. Air Force as a military recreation facility open to the public. The NPS is seeking a long-term lease that will enable an

offeror to make necessary investments in historic rehabilitation of deteriorating facilities, and the provision of public services and programs at the site. The park has kept the USAF informed throughout the lead up to this announcement, and they have express interest in participating in the RFQ process. (Updated 04/25/18).

On or after May 29, the NPS will release the Tule Lake Unit of World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the public. The FWS co-manages two of three parcels that comprise the Tule Lake Unit, and the FWS has concurred with issuing the FONSI. The selected action outlines the long-term management and development for the unit established in May 2008 by President Bush. (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 30, the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission will hold a kick-off event at Independence National Historical Park. Superintendent Cynthia MacLeod along with Philadelphia Mayor Kenney and Pennsylvania Governor Wolf have been invited to speak at the event. The NPS has received a special use permit application for this event which is going through the approval process. The public and media will be invited. Before the event, the Commissioners will receive a tour of the Liberty Bell Center and Independence Hall. After the event, the Commissioners will hold a public meeting in the Park at the National Constitution Center and then hold an executive meeting. During both meetings, the Commission will begin planning programs and activities commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. The Commission is composed of representatives from various organizations and corporations, as well as eight members of Congress. (Updated 05/02/2018)

By May 30, USDA APHIS will complete data analysis that will inform a schedule for bison transfer to the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Ft. Peck, Montana. On April 5, Yellowstone National Park and the Deputy Administrator of USDA APHIS discussed several key issues related to the park's proposed bison quarantine program. This was follow-up to a February 2018 meeting, convened and facilitated by the Secretary of the Interior, between DOI, NPS, USDA APHIS, Ft. Peck tribal leadership, and the State of Montana. Substantive progress was confirmed on several issues including the structure and signators for agreements on quarantine facility operations, the future transfer of brucellosis-free bison to the Ft. Peck reservation, and USDA APHIS certification of the park bison quarantine facility. Yellowstone bison management and quarantine receive national public interest and media coverage. (Updated 04/18/18)

By May 31, the NPS intends to award multiple concession contracts for mountaineering guide services at Denali National Park and Preserve. Applicant submissions have been scored and rated. The selection process is currently in the matching phase where, one by one, prospective concessioners with ANILCA preferences have an opportunity to match the best offer. New contracts will have a term of 10 years, beginning January 1, 2019. (Updated 03/27/18).

**[UPDATE]** On or before June 1, the Missouri Department of Agriculture will issue its findings relative to the improper use of herbicides by a private contractor to the NPS on NPS lands at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. The over application occurred in the Summer and Fall of 2016 and its effect became evident in the Spring of 2017. Some 170 trees show signs of

mortality and stress. The contractor has been cooperative to date and has indicated willingness to make restitution for damages. The NPS is working to evaluate the best approach to restore resources. (Updated 05/02/2018)

Between June 1-15, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (pending Departmental approval of NOA) expects to issue a Record of Decision for the Vista Grande Drainage Basin Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report /Environmental Impact Statement prepared in cooperation with the City of Daly City, California. This project would allow Daly City to take project actions at Fort Funston to address storm-related flooding in the Vista Grande Drainage Basin. [PEPC link](#) (04/04/18).

On June 2, construction crews will begin temporary stabilization repairs on Arlington Memorial Bridge. The project start was delayed to accommodate the Rolling Thunder special event over Memorial Day weekend. This repair work is designed to keep the bridge open to traffic during its full rehabilitation (beginning in fall 2018). Work crews will repair bridge deck supports in the drawbridge span and the road deck in the westbound roadway. This work will require intermittent single lane closures on the bridge beginning after Memorial Day weekend. (Updated 04/11/18).

On June 14, the U.S. Mint will release the America the Beautiful Quarters Program coin honoring Voyageurs National Park. A ceremony will be held in International Falls, Minnesota. (04/04/18).

On June 15, Yosemite National Park's Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias will reopen to the public, following a 3-year \$40 million project funded through the NPS and Yosemite Conservancy matching funds. A new parking lot and welcome center has been constructed at the South Entrance, a shuttle bus will take visitors to the big trees, a handicap accessible boardwalk has been constructed, trails have been improved, and new restrooms have been installed. The dedication ceremony to mark the completion of the project is slated for June 14. <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/mariposagrove.htm> (03/07/18)

**[NEW] (Close Hold)** On June 18, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park will host King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain for a tour of Mission San Jose. The City of San Antonio Office of International Relations is coordinating the park tour as part of a three-day visit by the royal family to commemorate the Tri-centennial of the founding of San Antonio, Texas, as a Spanish mission in 1718. A public announcement about the visit will be made at a later date. Park employees involved in the planning effort have signed a modified confidentiality agreement (reviewed by our solicitor) with the City of San Antonio to coordinate planning efforts and keep the visit confidential. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 26, the Acadia National Park Draft Transportation Plan and EIS public comment period will close. The comment period is open concurrently with the published EPA Notice of Availability. Public comment will be received through the PEPC website, standard mail, and during Open House events. Press interest in this public comment period is expected to be very high. The communication plan has been shared with NPS Comms. (05/02/2018)

Expected to last through June or the end of the dry season, Burnett Oil Company will continue seismic operation within Big Cypress National Preserve. The Nobles Grade 3D Seismic Survey, a proposal that the National Park Service and Burnett examined and refined for more than two years before it was approved in May 2016, originally began in March of 2017 and suspended operations by June 2, 2017, when conditions became too wet to continue. Burnett is using a vibroseis technique to acquire geologic data to assess the potential for oil drilling within Big Cypress National Preserve. It is expected the exploration will continue this year through the south Florida dry season which should end by June 2018. Work began on March 29. (Updated 04/11/18).

July 3 is the deadline for the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to submit a nomination to the Keeper of the Ch'u'itnu Historic District Traditional Cultural Property nomination submitted by the Native Village of Tyonek (NVT). On April 4, 2018, the Alaska Historical Commission (Commission) approved the nomination submitted by the NVT, a federally recognized tribe that has lived within the proposed district for many generations. The District encompasses ca. 109,000 acres of land within Alaska's Ch'u'tnu River watershed approximately 90 miles west of Anchorage. The nomination is opposed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources as well as some private organizations/commercial entities. An accord can only be submitted to the Keeper by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and only after it has been reviewed by the Alaska Historical Commission. It is the Keeper's understanding that despite approval of the nomination by the Commission, the SHPO remains strongly opposed to it. Failure of the SHPO to meet the 90 day/ July 3 deadline will likely result in the filing of a third appeal by NVT directly to the Keeper to review the nomination and list the property in the NR. (04/18/18)

**[UPDATE]** By July 15, Olympic National Park's 2017 Natural Resource Condition Assessment (NRCA) will be published as a National Park Service Resource Report. This report is jointly funded by the USGS and the NPS NRCA Program. A joint NPS-USGS news release will be issued announcing the report. (Updated 5/2/2018)

Between July 19-31, the American Indian Movement (AIM) will hold its 27th annual Sundance at Pipestone National Monument. The Sundance is the central sacred ceremony for the Lakota Tribes. On April 2, the NPS received a proposal from AIM to improve the grounds used for the Sundance. The NPS began working through the compliance process for the proposed improvements and has introduced possible alternatives to meet AIM's needs. (Updated 04/11/18).

By August 2018, the NPS and the National Park Foundation (NPF) will complete their joint Impact Investment Study. The Impact Investing Study is being funded by the NPF and will analyze how federal agencies have developed third-party financed infrastructure construction, operations, revitalization, and recapitalization programs over the past 20 years. The study will also identify potential new or modified authorities or policies required to implement alternative financing strategies to help the NPS move forward with the construction, repair, and ongoing maintenance of bureau infrastructure. (03/14/18).

[NEW] Through September 20, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is undertaking a [paving project](#) that will result in single-lane closures and traffic delays intermittently between the Newfound Gap area south to the park boundary at Cherokee North Carolina. The Federal Highway Administration awarded the \$3 million paving contract to Estes Brothers Construction. Roadwork will include the application of a thin lift pavement overlay. (5/2/2018)

## **Awareness**

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

[NEW] On April 20, staff from Sand Lake NWR responded to a large waterfowl die-off approximately six miles northeast of Ipswich, South Dakota. Two thousand to 3,000 waterfowl carcasses and sick or injured birds were discovered over an estimated four-square mile area. Most of the affected waterfowl were snow geese, but Canada geese and ducks were also observed. Several birds were collected by South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks and FWS staff, and were sent to the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin for analysis. At this time, the cause of the die-off is unknown. Updates will be provided when lab analyses are completed. (05/02/2018)

[NEW] On April 26, FWS issued an internal guidance memo clarifying when landowners should consider applying for a permit under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act. The guidance memo does not change any of the law, regulation, or policy for when a permit may be needed under this section; rather, it clarifies what those standards are so that landowners receive clear and consistent advice from FWS. This memo and an accompanying flow chart are part of an effort to help Ecological Services field offices provide clear, consistent, and accurate advice to landowners. FWS will be distributing this guidance memo to all field offices and posting the flow chart to all web pages where the 10(a)(1)(B) permit applications are found. (05/02/2018)

[NEW] On April 12, a reporter from the *Eureka Times-Standard* submitted a second FOIA request for all documents and communications regarding Trinity River Adaptive Management Working Group. An acknowledgement response from the Regional Director was sent on April 23, and the request is being coordinated by FWS's Arcata Fish and Wildlife Office and the Regional Office. (05/02/2018)

[UPDATE] Ash Meadows NWR in southwest Nevada has been subject to litigation by Victor Fuentes, pastor of Ministerio Solida Church Camp since 2012. Fuentes owns a 40-acre private inholding within the boundary of the refuge. On April 20, 2018 a seminar was held focusing on the topic of Nevada water rights. The event was held at Patch of Heaven Church Camp on Ash Meadows NWR. Ryan Bundy, candidate for Nevada governor, other candidates and county officials attended the meeting. Bundy led most of the meeting in which he recommended that the Patch of Heaven take their water back from FWS. However, Fuentes stated he would continue to follow legal means to shame FWS into returning what was rightfully his. The meeting took place without any impacts or disruption to refuge operations. The refuge took, and will continue to take, measures to secure information and protect staff and volunteers. (Updated 05/02/2018)

### **National Park Service**



Media attention and pre-construction activities are ramping-up for the Mountain Valley Pipeline, which will cross the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Several protests are ongoing on private or other non-NPS lands. Specific construction dates are not yet set, but could begin as early as May or June on USFS lands (adjacent to Appalachian National Scenic Trail) and NPS lands (Blue Ridge Parkway). Media attention is not focused on the NPS at this time. The NPS Washington Office of Communications has the lead for any media inquiries. (Updated 4/25/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (PDAS) John Tahsuda will participate in the COOP exercise on May 8, but otherwise will be in the office this week.

Acting Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Director Darryl LaCounte will be in the office this week.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Director Tony Dearman will be working from the BIE Oklahoma City office on May 7, 8 and 9, then head to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan for the grand opening of the Bahweting School and meet with Billy Mills during an event May 10 -12.

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management George Bearpaw will be in the office this week.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

**[NEW]** On Wednesday, May 9, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold a hearing for the nomination of Tara Sweeney to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

**[NEW]** On May 16, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold an oversight hearing on school safety in Indian Country. BIE Director Dearman is a potential witness.

On May 18, PDAS Tahsuda will be the keynote speaker at the Haskell Indian Nations University 2018 commencement in Lawrence, Kansas.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

May 7 is the deadline for written comments on the BIA's request for comments on its categorical exclusions (CATEXs) under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), per the Federal Register notice published on March 6.

#### **Bureau of Indian Education**

May 17 is the deadline for comments and nominations in response to Federal Register notice published on April 17 on the Bureau of Indian Education Standards, Assessments, and Accountability System Negotiated Rulemaking Committee Establishment; Proposed Membership.

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

May 23-24 will be the Tribal-Interior Budget Council (TIBC) meeting at the Washington Plaza Hotel in Washington, DC.

**[UPDATED]** May 31, PDAS Tahsuda will host a Tribal consultation in Rapid City, South Dakota, on potential revisions to the fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR Part 151. A Dear Tribal Leader letter was distributed on May 1.

**[UPDATED]** June 3-6, PDAS Tahsuda is planning on hosting four listening sessions at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri, addressing the DOI reorganization, fee-to-trust regulations, U.S. Department of Education set-aside funding for BIE, and law enforcement issues.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

June 3 is the deadline for issuance of final BIA guidance for Tribes on how to conduct background checks of foster care parents and employees under the Native American Children's Safety Act (NACSA). BIA is currently collecting additional edits from HHS and DOJ and anticipates having the final guidance ready for signature by May 4.

June 30 is the deadline for written comments on whether and how to revise BIA's fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR 151, per the Dear Tribal Leader letter dated February 15, 2018.

#### **Bureau of Indian Education**

May 21 is the deadline for comments on the Bureau of Indian Affairs' proposed rule updating the regulation regarding when Indian students are eligible for benefits of education under the Johnson-O'Malley Act (JOM), per the Federal Register notice published on March 21, 2018. PDAS Tahsuda and BIE Director Dearman consulted with Navajo Nation at their request on April 25.

May 21-25, BIE will host a strategic planning meeting on Goals 4 through 6 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

May 22-23, a SIPI Engineering faculty member will attend a NASA-NSF-NIFA Symposium in Washington, DC.

On May 25, SIPI will conduct focus groups of current students to determine the impact of online and evening/weekend course offerings on student enrollment patterns. This will provide the

basis for a market study to determine the feasibility of future online and evening/weekend college.

May 30-June 2, SIPI's IC-Mars project lead and four students will attend the TECHLAV Annual Meeting in North Carolina University AT&T in Greensboro, North Carolina.

**[NEW]** July 1-7, the Native Youth Community Adaptation and Leadership Congress (NYCALC), an interagency effort of more than eight Federal agencies, will support 100 Tribal students in a program to promote conservation on Tribal lands and workforce development.

**[UPDATED]** The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children originally scheduled for May 16-18 in Choctaw, Mississippi, is being rescheduled to a later date to ensure that sufficient advance notice is provided to Board members and the public.

**[NEW]** Throughout June and July, BIE's Associate Deputy Director for Bureau-Operated Schools will host regional trainings for BIE-funded school staff and Title V staff:

- June 10-15 – Chemawa Indian School, Salem, Oregon
- June 17-22 – Bloomington, Minnesota
- June 24-29 – Cherokee, North Carolina
- July 9-13 – Flandreau, South Dakota
- July 16-20 – Phoenix, Arizona
- July 23-27 – Bismarck, North Dakota

## **Awareness**

### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

**[UPDATED]** DOI Reorganization - Indian Affairs staff expect to have a Dear Tribal Leader letter ready for surname next week to announce Tribal consultations on the DOI Reorganization. The plan is to kick off the consultation series with a listening session at the NCAI meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, the week of June 4.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs marked up and passed out of Committee, S. 2515, the PROGRESS Act, amending Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act for Self Determination and Self Governance to provide Tribes with greater flexibility to efficiently tailor, consolidate and administer federal programs for their communities.

### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

**[NEW]** The week of April 24, 2018, 198 new wildfires have been reported. All but four of these were less than 20 acres. A total of 166 wildfires were less than one acre in size. The largest fire was burning at Fort Apache and San Carlos agencies. The Rattlesnake Fire is approximately 17,900 acres and 25% contained. The road and area closures are in effect. Managers estimate full containment by May 11, 2018.

**[NEW]** On May 3, 2018, the Department's newly established Federal Negotiation Team for the Havasupai Tribe water rights claims held its first meeting with Tribal officials at the Tribal Headquarters at Supai, Arizona located within the Grand Canyon. The team was established after an unsuccessful attempt by the Tribe to obtain a declaration of its water rights in Federal Court. BIA's membership on the Federal Team is handled by BIA Western Region.

**[NEW]** A proposed rule to revise regulations addressing rights-of-way on Indian land (25 CFR 169) to exempt Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments from bonding and security requirements is in surname and is expected to be ready for publication before the end of May.

The Federal Register notice providing the 2018 list of Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Designated Agents List is with Exec Sec and awaiting approval to publish in the Federal Register. ICWA requires State courts and child welfare agencies to provide a notice to Indian tribes whenever an Indian child (as defined in the Act) is involved in a child custody proceeding. The Federal Register notice lists the agents that each Tribe has designated to receive that notice.

**[UPDATED]** Fee-to-Trust Completed Cases: For the time period of April 16 to April 25, 2018, BIA completed five land acquisition cases, taking a total of 4,612.29 acres into trust for four Tribes. To date for calendar year 2018, 103 cases have been completed totaling approximately 7,932.60 acres. Since 2009, a total of approximately 661,908 acres have been conveyed into trust.

Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership (HEARTH) Act - A total of 43 leasing regulations, submitted by 39 tribal nations, have been approved under the HEARTH Act. A total of eight leasing regulations were published in the Federal Register on Mar. 28, 2018. The following is the total of 25 leasing regulations in various stages of review or awaiting approval: 2 tribal leasing regulations submitted to the Federal Register for publication; 4 tribal leasing regulations in various stages of the review and approval process; 1 tribal leasing regulations in final review with DRES; 1 in final review with the region; 14 within the in-house review process and 3 with tribal governments for modifications.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) team won second place in the 2018 NASA Swarmathon, a national competition to develop cooperative robotics to revolutionize space exploration. This is the third year in a row the team has competed and won – bronze in 2016, gold in 2017, and silver in 2018.

### **ASSISTANT SECRETARY INSULAR AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

#### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel (May 6 – May 12, 2018)**

AS Domenech – Will participate in the COOP exercise on May 8 in Shepherdstown, WV.

OIA Director Pula - Will participate in the COOP exercise on May 8 in Shepherdstown, WV.

## Insular Affairs

**Guam War Claims Meeting:** On May 7, OIA Technical Assistance Director and Policy Director will be meeting with the Departments of Treasury and Justice to discuss the process through which Treasury will be withholding funds from Guam's Section 30 money to fund the Guam War Claims Program, which Justice's Foreign Claims Settlement Commission is administering. P.L. 114-328, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017 included the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, authorizing payments of certain claims to the living survivors and heirs of those who died as a result of the occupation, and directing the Secretary of the Treasury to establish a special fund (the "Claims Fund") for the payment of said claims. The Claims Fund, is to be composed of the excess of amounts of duties, taxes, and fees collected under Section 30 after FY 2014 over the amount collected during FY 2014.

**Outer Pacific Meeting:** On May 9, OIA staff will join the members of the Federal Regional Council (FRC) on the quarterly conference call of the Outer Pacific Committee. The FRC is a consortium of 25 federal departments and agencies representing approximately 60 program offices in Region IX. Outer Pacific Committee The Outer Pacific Committee (OPC) focuses on issues related to the three U.S. Flag Territories: American Samoa (AS), Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam and also of the three Freely Associated States: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and Republic of Palau (ROP). Collectively, these territories and states are referred to as the US-affiliated Pacific Island jurisdictions (USAPI). A primary goal for the FRC is to work in a coordinated manner to make federal programs more effective and efficient in Region IX.

**FY2018 Grant Funding Application Review:** Beginning in May, OIA will be reviewing grant applications under the Technical Assistance program for FY2018 funding.

## International Affairs

**Law Enforcement Training in Uganda:** In conjunction with the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement, DOI-ITAP is supporting a law enforcement training course in Uganda May 7-11. Approximately 20 participants from various organizations, including the Uganda Wildlife Force and Natural Resource Conservation Network, will be represented. The training will be geared toward increasing information sharing and developing professional networks, and will include sessions on evidence collection and forensic imaging of telephones and computers. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

**Kenya Wildlife Service USFWS Forensic Lab Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is supporting a technical exchange May 8-11 between the Kenya Wildlife Service and the USFWS Forensic Lab in Ashland, Oregon. This exchange will serve as an opportunity to share lessons learned and promote a train the trainer model to spread the learning to additional counterparts when participants return to their home country. This is the second exchange between these two entities. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

## Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

Nothing significant to report.

### Hurricane Recovery

**FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group:** AS Domenech participated in the bi-weekly RSFLG meeting at FEMA. USVI recovery continues to be hampered by liquidity problems with the Government.

The Department continues to participate in the FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands (USVI) as the lead federal agency on the Natural and Cultural Resources (NCR) Recovery mission. DOI core teams are deployed in Puerto Rico and the USVI to work with Territorial government representatives and local partners on developing recovery priorities and long-term recovery strategies. Additional recreational sites in Puerto Rico were identified and added to the assessment list this week; assessments have been completed at 272 of 366 recreational sites by a DOI team of recreation planners and engineers. National Park Service curators, deployed to Puerto Rico, continued assessing damages to collections in museums, libraries, and archives around the Territory. In collaboration with FEMA, the NCR Recovery team convened a Resilient Ecotourism Industry Stakeholder Kick-off Meeting. Opportunities for alternative forms of tourism were discussed in collaboration with key organizations to begin initial planning of actions to jumpstart the Territory's tourism economy, with a focus on environmental and cultural sustainability. In USVI, National Park Service architects and archaeologists continued to assess damages to historic sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Department's headquarters and Bureau staff are coordinating staffing of damage assessment teams and identifying staff available for longer term deployments to replace core team members, whose deployment periods are ending. Historic architects and structural engineers are being sought through the Environmental Protection Agency's College/Underserved Population Program, to conduct additional assessments of National Register-eligible historic sites in Puerto Rico. The assessment data from all the damaged resources continues to be collected and synthesized to inform Puerto Rico's Recovery Plan by FEMA's May 10 deadline.

### Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)

#### International Affairs

**NAFTA 2.0:** In the aftermath of negotiations held in April, INT Policy Division staff continue to coordinate DOI input into interagency review of negotiating positions, including environmental, water and indigenous issues relevant for DOI, under the direction of the Deputy Secretary and ASIIA. In addition, INT is following up with ASIIA and DAS ASLM regarding the latest negotiations associated with Investor State Dispute Settlement, which are relevant to the oil and gas industry.

**Northern Rangelands Trust Law Enforcement Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is coordinating a technical exchange May 12-June 1 between two law enforcement officers from the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) and Yellowstone National Park. The NRT officers will be joining

National Park staff during the seasonal law enforcement officers training. This exchange will provide field training on interoperability and law enforcement coordination. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

**Combating Wildlife Trafficking Strategic Planning in Kenya:** DOI-ITAP is supporting a two person team -- consisting of a USGS employee and a retiree from the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement -- to travel to Kenya May 12-24 to help develop a mission strategy to combat wildlife trafficking in Kenya as specified in the END Act. The team will hold meetings with representatives from the U.S. Government and Kenyan partners to map counter wildlife trafficking activities being carried out in Kenya. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

#### **Press Releases Planned for the Following:**

- None Planned.

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

##### Insular Affairs

#### **U.S. Interagency Meeting on U.S. National Security Interests in the FAS and Territories:**

On June 8, the State Department and DOI will co-host a U.S.-only interagency dialogue to secure the future U.S. presence in Micronesia to include 1) a session on the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, which builds upon the work of the USG Interagency Working Group on the Freely Associated States and aims to secure U.S. interests beyond 2023; and 2) a session on U.S. territories: Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The dialogue will be held at the SBU/FOUO level.

#### **US Government Continues Discussions with Palau on Compact Funding:**

Following a successful initial meeting in Palau on May 1, 2018 between the United States and Palau representatives, both respective Ambassadors from the United States and Palau are considering a second round of discussions in DC during the week of June 11, 2018.

**White House Visit for the Freely Associated States:** Summer 2018 – The State Department is supportive of a request from the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for a working meeting at the White House for the Presidents of the three freely associated states: Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. This idea was raised by Secretary Zinke to FSM President Peter Christian when he visited Interior in 2017.

##### International Affairs

#### **MOU with Israel on Biodiversity Conservation, Protected Areas, and Cultural and**

**Historical Heritage:** Israel's Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) Director General has further postponed his visit to the U.S., potentially as late as this fall, at which time he hopes to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretary or his designee. INPA is contemplating a visit in the fall and will reach out with details as their planning advances. The MOU is intended

to strengthen cooperation on biodiversity conservation, protected areas, and cultural and historical heritage. Decisions will need to be made about whether to host an event at DOI or at the Israeli Embassy, as well as regarding whether and what type of press or other public announcements should be made in conjunction with the signing. INT expects to share the latest draft of the MOU with DOI senior leadership shortly.

**Event Planning in Indonesia:** DOI-ITAP will implement an event planning workshop for the staff of the the Coral Triangle Initiative Regional Secretariat based in Manado, Indonesia May 17-19. This workshop will be led by two professional event organizers and will be tailored to the specific event-planning needs and challenges faced by the Regional Secretariat. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

#### Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

**World Oceans Day and Capitol Hill Ocean Week:** World Oceans Day is June 8 and Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) will be held June 5-7. The Ocean, Great Lakes, and Coastal Program Coordinator, along with the DOI Senior Ocean Policy Team, are coordinating the Department's participation in CHOW, which is hosted annually by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. June has also historically been proclaimed as National Oceans Month, including by President Trump in 2017. Two new issues of the DOI NEWSWAVE newsletter are expected to be released in June for these events.

#### Awareness

##### International Affairs

**US-Canada Bilateral Discussion on Transboundary Issues:** DOI (including INT, OEPC, and several bureaus) attended the DOS-led April 26 semi-annual meeting between the U.S. and Canada on transboundary environmental issues. The topic of energy development within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was on the agenda at the request of the Canadians. Canada is keen to protect the Porcupine Caribou herd, and referred to the 1987 agreement in which our governments agreed to consult before taking any policy actions that could adversely affect the migration or breeding grounds of the herd. Canada is pleased that the U.S. has recently appointed two members to the International Porcupine Caribou Board, and is looking forward to having the two remaining members appointed. Canada reiterated concerns among northern communities (including the Gwich'in), territorial governments, the federal government, and other stakeholders about possible energy development within ANWR. Canada plans to submit comments to the recent Federal Register notice.

**Iceland Secretarial Meeting Request and Whaling Activities:** The Embassy of Iceland is seeking a meeting with the Secretary to petition for decertification under the Pelly Amendment, which could lead to changes in their diplomatic status associated with Iceland's whaling activities (DOI certified in 2014 that Iceland was diminishing the effectiveness of CITES due to the conduct of trade in whale meat by Icelandic nationals). INT has put Scheduling in touch with a contact at the Icelandic Embassy, and Scheduling is considering dates in mid-May. INT is



coordinating with FWS, which as the lead for Pelly will provide lead support for the meeting, and is facilitating coordination with the State Department as well.

**Vietnamese Minister Meeting with Secretary and MOU Signing:** The Vietnamese Minister of Public Security Tô Lâm has postponed his trip to Washington, DC until a date to be determined, likely late June or early July. The Vietnamese government has expressed interest in the Minister meeting with the Secretary to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen U.S. – Vietnam cooperation to combat wildlife trafficking. The Ministry of Public Security is the government ministry responsible for managing Vietnam’s police and public security forces, which play a key role in wildlife law enforcement. INT continues to work with FWS Office of Law Enforcement and the State Department to finalize the MOU with Vietnam.

**Assistance to Tribes Seeking Repatriation from Abroad:** The week of April 23, INT Policy Division staff received a request for assistance in repatriating several ancestral remains from the Canterbury Museum in New Zealand, from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Nation. INT engaged with the requestors to clarify their needs, and reached out to the NPS National NAGPRA Program and the State Department (DOS) to initiate a federal response. Meanwhile, another Paris auction of American Indian items was announced for June 21. INT Policy Division staff alerted colleagues within DOI and at DOJ and DOS, and will monitor developments with an eye toward helping tribes stay informed and assisting to recover specific items if requested.

**Interagency US-China Science and Technology Agreement (STA) Discussions:** INT is preparing for expected interagency discussions on the renewal of the U.S. - China STA, which may begin in the next couple of weeks. The discussions will be led by the National Security Council. The interagency will be considering how to move forward with the STA renewal given some U.S. agency concerns about intellectual property rights, and concerns about whether China sees the STA Annex on intellectual property rights as legally binding. USGS has six protocols that fall under the STA umbrella agreement, and FWS has one.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

ASLM Joe Balash will participate in annual training in WV from May 7-8.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kate MacGregor will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Casey Hammond will participate in annual training in WV from May 7-8.

BSEE Director Scott Angelle will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will participate in annual training in WV from May 7-8.

## **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

### **Bureau of Land Management**

**[UPDATED] April 23 – May 15.** BLM-AK prepared a Federal Register Notice providing constructive notice of a decision approving 424.35 acres for conveyance to Sivuqaq, Inc., and Kukulget, Inc., for the Native villages of Gambell and Savoonga on the former St. Lawrence Island Reindeer Reserve. This is a non-discretionary action in accordance with Sec. 19(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), and the native corporations will receive title to the surface and subsurface estates. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. DTS 2040

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The BLM California Desert District anticipates elevating fire restrictions and commencing recreational shooting restrictions on public lands in southern California by early May, depending on weather conditions. (4/20/18)

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Green Plant Exploratory excavation Project Environmental Assessment. Green Planet's Plan of Operation is to excavate and process 400 yd<sup>3</sup> of placer material from a fenced site, approximately 220 feet by 75 feet (total work area), situated on the St. Philips placer claim on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Mohave Ground Squirrel Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (4/20/18)

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates publishing a draft Environmental Assessment for the Keystone Exploratory Drilling Project, located on existing un-patented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The Park Service is a cooperating agency on the joint document. (4/20/18)

**In Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Perdito Exploratory Drilling Project Environmental Assessment. The Perdito Exploration Project is located on existing un-patented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (4/20/18)

**May 7.** BLM-AK. The BLM Alaska Fire Service will host a day-long Fire and Smoke Initiative session during the week-long Joint Polar Satellite System Arctic Summit in Alaska. The Summit is focused on challenges in the Alaska and the Arctic where the system's satellites provide services. The University of Alaska-Fairbanks Geographic Information Network of Alaska is coordinating the summit through the Alaska Fire Science Consortium. The day-long session will discuss available smoke and fire modeling tools and includes a tour of the BLM Alaska Fire Service and the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center. The new generation polar-orbiting operational environmental satellite system is available through a collaboration between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7.** BLM-AK. The EPA published a Notice of Availability (NOA) on the Greater Moose's Tooth 2 (GMT2) Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on March 23 and the BLM published an NOA on March 29 in the Federal Register. Publication opened a 45-day public comment period, which closes on May 7, 2018. The Draft Supplemental EIS analyzes an application for oil and gas development of the GMT2 production pad in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and supplements an earlier analysis of the project in the 2004 Alpine Satellite Development Plan. Under the preferred alternative identified in the Draft Supplemental EIS, the associated pipeline and access road would cross both Kuukpik Corporation-owned lands and federally-managed lands within the NPR-A. The infrastructure would also connect to the Greater Moose's Tooth 1 development, which is eight miles away. Public meetings were held in Anchorage April 16, Fairbanks April 17, and the North Slope communities of Utqiagvik April 9, Atkasuk April 10, and Anaktuvuk Pass April 12. The meeting scheduled in Nuiqsut for April 18 was postponed due to a death in the community. The meeting will be rescheduled for the week of April 30. The Native Village of Nuiqsut has requested a 30-day extension to the public comment period due to the postponement of the meeting. BLM Alaska is reviewing the request and project timelines. (2/28/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office will release an Environmental Assessment of the proposed Buffalo Horn Land Exchange for a 30-day public review period. The preferred alternative would convey the surface estates of 14 parcels of Federal lands totaling approximately 2,815 acres in Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties for one non-Federal parcel in Rio Blanco County totaling 1,835 acres. Most parcels are within the White River Field Office, with one Federal parcel that includes lands in the Little Snake Field Office. The feasibility review found that disposal of the selected Federal lands and acquisition of the non-Federal lands would improve management efficiency of public land resources, provide greater public access to recreation lands, and help protect important wildlife habitat and cultural landscapes. Congressional notification letters were signed April 19. (1/10/18)

**May 7.** BLM-MT/DK. The North Central Montana District is in the process of renewing the grazing permits on 114 grazing allotments in the Bears Paw to Missouri River Breaks planning area. This planning area contains 298,668 acres of public land that is mainly located in the southern portion of Phillips, Blaine and Chouteau Counties in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument (Monument) and the Havre Field Office. Western Watersheds Project recently hired a new public policy consultant and Montana Coordinator. The Acting Monument Manager and members of his staff will take the new coordinator on a field trip of the Monument to provide him with an on-the-ground understanding of the opportunities and challenges the BLM intends to address with these grazing permit renewals while working to develop a better working relationship with the organization. (3/23/18)

**May 7.** BLM-MT/DK. BLM staff will meet with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), American Colloids Company and Wyoben regarding plans of operation and permitting bentonite mining in sage grouse habitat. American Colloids Company and Wyoben are two principle operators for bentonite mining and have submitted Plans of Operations under 43 CFR 3809. Located near the Wyoming border along the western flank of the Pryor Mountains near Warren, Montana, the mines are mapped as Priority Habitat for Sage Grouse. The operators need an approved Plan of Operations from the BLM and an Opencut Permit from Montana DEQ. The meeting will address procedure for issuing both permits. Attending for the

BLM include Nate Arave, Solid Minerals Branch Chief; Dave Lefevre, Billings Field Office Assistant Field Manager; Dorothy Van Oss, Geologist; and Amy Waring, Mitigation Specialist. Caroline Sime will represent the State of Montana Sage Grouse oversight team. (4/20/18)

**May 7.** BLM-WY published the [Notice of Availability](#) (NOA) for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Riley Ridge to Natrona Project on March 23, 2018. Publication of the NOA announced the availability of the Draft EIS and opened a 45-day public comment period that closes on May 7. Denbury Green Pipeline-Riley Ridge, LLC is proposing to construct a 16- and 24- inch carbon dioxide pipeline and associated facilities along a 243-mile linear right-of-way through Fremont, Sublette, Sweetwater and Natrona Counties in central and western Wyoming. The project would create approximately 380 direct jobs and generate \$1.7 million in state and local tax revenue during construction. (2/21/18) DTS 1749

**May 7 – 8.** BLM National Program Lead for National Monuments and National Conservation Areas Timothy Fisher will visit Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the lighthouse designation. The anniversary will feature a Plein (outdoor) Air and Photography event, Learn to Fish family event, and an evening event with partner leaders from the Town of Jupiter, Jupiter Inlet Colony and Palm Beach County Commissioner, and the village of Tequesta. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 7 – 10.** The BLM Resources & Minerals Leadership Committee (RMC) will meet in Washington, D.C. The RMC is comprised of Deputy State Directors for Resources and Minerals from each state, and Division Chiefs from the Washington Office. It is the primary advisory group for policies and practices relevant to resources and minerals managed by the BLM. The meeting will focus on Secretarial Orders and BLM priority topics, and will include a joint meeting with the BLM Field Committee on Tuesday afternoon. Brian Steed and Mike Nedd will meet with the Committee on the first day to deliver Leaders' Intent. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7 – 11.** BLM-NM. The Oklahoma Field Office expects to distribute a news release announcing issuance of a coal lease modification to Georges Colliers, Inc., to expand the active Pollyanna No. 8 coal mine. From March 19 -23, 2018, public notices were posted in three area newspapers, with one more pending, and Dear Reader letters were sent to interested parties; a news release is planned to announce the lease issuance. Colliers submitted the application in April 2015; the Decision Record was signed March 19 and posted to ePlanning on March 20, 2018. The mine is just south of Spiro, Okla., and the lease modification would include 520 acres of additional federal coal reserves at a depth of 1,000 – 1,200 feet, adjacent to the existing mine/lease boundary that would be accessed by underground mining methods using existing infrastructure. The additional acreage contains an estimated 5,616,000 tons of coal and would extend the life of the mine by about 8 years and continue to support 80 existing jobs. The modified lease was signed April 16, 2018, and has been sent to the applicant. Pending return of the lease with the applicant's signature as well as any payments due, the lease will be issued for the 1st day of the following month. (3/16/18)

**[UPDATED] May 7 – June 15.** BLM-AK is issuing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Taku River in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that the Taku River is navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the application, the

decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title to the bed of the navigable waters and to restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 36,160 acres (35 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and the U.S. Forest Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/13/18) DTS 2055

**[UPDATED] May 7 – June 15.** BLM-AK is preparing a *Federal Register* notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Egegik River, Becharof Lake, and Ruth Lake and Outlet in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 290,983 acres of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The [2005 Bristol Bay Area Plan](#) from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources identified some mineral potential in the areas surrounding Egegik River and Becharof Lake. The plan also gives a summary of the region. (4/4/18)

**May 8.** BLM-MT/DK. Representatives from the Crow Tribe, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the BLM Miles City Field Office will meet in Crow Agency, Montana, to discuss the status of fluid mineral projects and future development on the Crow Reservation. The agenda is yet to be solidified. BLM attendees will include Todd Yeager (Acting District Manager), Eric Lepisto (Acting Field Manager), Shane Findlay (Assistant Field Manager, Minerals), and Paul Helland (Petroleum Engineer). Media and public have not been invited. (4/20/18)

**May 8.** BLM-MT/DK. The 30-day comment period begins on an Environmental Assessment that addresses the potential suitability to assign just over 5,816.63 acres of land in Prairie, Custer, and Richland counties to the State of Montana. These parcels were part of a larger list of lands in which the State of Montana expressed interest in a December 2015 application with the BLM. Under the law admitting the State of Montana to the Union, known as the Enabling Act of 1889, the State was entitled to sections 16 and 36 of each township. Many of the lands in these sections had already been entered by homesteaders or set aside for other purposes, such as Indian Reservations or National Forests, and the State could not receive them. Therefore, the State can select public lands under BLM jurisdiction in lieu of the section 16 or 36 lands it did not receive. Medium to low controversy is anticipated. (4/11/18)

**[NEW] May 8 – 10.** The BLM Field Committee will hold a face-to-face meeting in Washington, D.C. to discuss organizational reform, workforce planning, and related issues, and will include a leadership discussion with Brian Steed and Mike Nedd on Tuesday morning as

well as a joint meeting with the BLM Resources & Minerals Leadership Committee on Tuesday afternoon. The Field Committee is comprised of senior field and headquarters leaders who are responsible for daily operations as the BLM carries out its mission. The Committee serves as a senior leadership forum for the operational decision makers to assure uniform implementation of BLM operations and strategic vision; provide insight and advice on sensitive issues for national and state policy; develop, share and exchange best practices to improve operational efficiency; advise and make recommendations to foster mentoring, training, and leadership development; and serve as a nexus between field operations and the Executive Leadership Team. (4/26/18)

**May 8 – 11.** BLM-UT. The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will hold its second cooperating agency meeting/workshop in Kanab, Utah, to develop preliminary alternatives for four Draft Management Plans – the Grand Staircase Unit, the Kaiparowits Unit and the Escalante Canyons Unit of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, as well as public lands that were excluded from the Monument. Draft Management Plans are scheduled for release in July 2018. Invitations to join the planning effort as cooperating agencies were extended to Garfield County Commission, Kane County Commission, Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office (PLPCO), National Park Service (Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Bryce Canyon National Park, and Capitol Reef National Park), and Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians. As of April 17, the following entities have signed an MOU: National Park Service and PLPCO. MOUs with the remaining cooperating agencies are being finalized. The public comment period ended on April 13, and as of April 16, more than 120,000 comments have been received. (4/20/18)

**May 9.** BLM-MT/DK. The Incident Commander Pre-2018 Fire Season Meeting will take place in Miles City, Montana. Agenda items for this coordination meeting will include agency updates by State of South Dakota, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the BLM. Other discussion topics will be aviation updates, dispatch operations, county command and communication issues, Line of Duty incidents, supply requisitions and other issues as they arise. BLM attendees include Miles City Fire/Dispatch staffers Scott McAvoy, Rick Lang, Amy Lancaster, Jeff Essman and Meg Geary. Media and public have not been invited. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 11.** BLM-CO. Several western Colorado field offices are holding kick-off meetings with consulting parties for a Programmatic Agreement focusing on Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act for travel management planning. With several field offices conducting simultaneous travel management efforts, the Programmatic Agreement presents a more efficient way to do Section 106 consultation because many of the consulting parties would be the same for each office. The discussion will include developing a programmatic agreement outlining how each field office would account for impacts to cultural resources during planning, implementation and plan maintenance. More than 140 invitations were sent to consulting parties, which include 28 tribes and tribal organizations, 14 counties, as well as a number of non-profit groups, local governments, and state and federal agencies. The affected field offices are Gunnison, Little Snake, Tres Rios, Uncompahgre and White River. (4/26/18)

**May 11.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with Aurora City Water Resources to discuss permitting and scheduling for a potential new reservoir called the Wild Horse Project. The project is in its initial planning stages. If the City of Aurora moves forward with the project,

it will likely involve rights-of-way for various BLM-managed parcels in Park County. The project is in its initial planning stage. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 11 – June 15.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Fortymile River System in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 2,084 acres (86 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and BLM. The Notice of Application for an RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. (4/26/18)

**In Mid-May.** BLM-ID. Boise District Fire and Aviation expects to sign the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-Grouse Habitat (BOSH) Project. The Final EIS was released for a 30-day public availability period on Feb. 9. The Final EIS, which was developed in cooperation with several state and federal agencies, analyzes the removal of encroaching Western juniper on 726,000 acres of sagebrush steppe habitat in Owyhee County. This juniper treatment project builds on proactive land management policies and practices to conserve the region's remaining sagebrush habitat, which supports significant economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, as well as abundant wildlife, including mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope and golden eagles. The public availability period closed on March 11. The BLM received ten comments, including comments addressing roughly three issues that will be documented in the ROD. The district is currently completing tribal consultation on the Final EIS and estimates signing the ROD in mid-May. (2/21/18)

**[NEW] Mid/Late May.** BLM-ID. A collaborative organization of state wildlife agencies, sportsmen's groups, private landowners, and non-governmental organizations will be publishing a series of short "Partners in the Sage" articles on landscape-level conservation partnerships. One article will include a feature on the Soda Fire rehabilitation with quotes from BLM Boise District Emergency Rehabilitation and Stabilization Supervisor Cindy Fritz and our partners. It is expected to be published in mid-to-late May. (4/26/18)

**[NEW] May 14.** The Annual BLM Law Enforcement Awards Ceremony will take place at 1:30 p.m. at the Main Interior Building. At this ceremony, which takes place during National Police Week, the BLM will honor its Law Enforcement Officers of the Year. BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will attend. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] May 14.** BLM-AK. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will release the Donlin Gold Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on April 27. Current Record of Decision (ROD) timelines include August 2018 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and September 2018 for the BLM, with the BLM Anchorage Field Manager as the anticipated authorized officer. The BLM has submitted the final consistency review of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Section 810 analysis to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is an

appendix to the Final EIS. On April 26, BLM-AK State Office staff met to discuss strategy for the BLM Record of Decision and right-of-way (ROW) grant. BLM-AK fisheries biologist Merlyn Schelske and Donlin Gold EIS project manager Laurie Thorpe are in discussions with Donlin Gold, LLC and the Alaska State Pipeline Coordination Section on specific stream crossing stipulations and other draft stipulations to be included in the mixed-lands jurisdiction natural gas pipeline right-of-way grant. On May 14, BLM-Alaska will participate in the final review of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Programmatic Agreement, which will be an appendix to the Record of Decision. Donlin Gold LLC applied for permits for an open-pit, hardrock gold mine in southwest Alaska. The mine site will also include waste treatment and waste rock facilities, a mill facility and a natural gas-powered power plant. BLM-AK has been participating as a cooperating agency on the project and is responsible for a right-of-way (ROW) authorization. Donlin Gold applied for a ROW on one-third of the 316-mile proposed natural gas pipeline. The ROW would cross approximately 92 miles and 4,322 acres of largely remote and undisturbed BLM-managed lands. The affected public lands are under a 1981 Management Framework Plan and the area is also included in the Bering Sea/Western Interior Resource Management Plan, currently under development.  
<http://www.DonlinGoldEIS.com>. (3/1/18)

**May 14 – June 12.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office (WRFO) will announce a 30-day public comment period on its plan (pending WO approval) to gather wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area (HMA) in northwestern Colorado. The Appropriate Management Level for the HMA is 135-235 wild horses and the current population estimate in the HMA is 544 wild horses. WRFO estimates that there are 374 wild horses living outside the HMA. This includes 305 horses in the adjacent, controversial West Douglas Herd Area. The BLM has never managed West Douglas for a long-term wild horse population because of habitat and terrain, and has not been able to remove all the wild horses from this area. Many activists want to see the BLM maintain a wild horse population in West Douglas. Conversely, ranchers in the area have long argued for the removal of all wild horses in West Douglas. In September 2017, the BLM removed 86 wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas HMA (but not from West Douglas) that were impacting private lands. WRFO is preparing a Determination of NEPA Adequacy for this year's potential gather, tiered to an environmental analysis completed last year. (4/10/18)

**[UPDATED] May 15.** BLM-ID. On May 15, the Bruneau Field Manager will issue two of three proposed grazing decisions, which renew grazing permits, restore riparian areas, protect cultural resources, and incorporate range improvement projects across 187,537 acres of BLM-administered lands. The project area lies entirely within a Priority Habitat Management Area, and contains wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was released on August 30, 2017, for public review, and the Field Manager has been meeting with permittees, state and federal agencies, and other interested publics to address concerns and comments provided in the EA prior to issuing decisions. (2/7/18)

**May 16.** BLM-ES. A meeting will take place at Fort Knox Garrison, Kentucky, between BLM Eastern States, Fort Knox Garrison (Department of Defense), and Louisville Gas & Electric (LG&E). This is the third meeting between the three entities (the first occurring December 7, 2017; the second on February 15, 2018). These regularly scheduled meetings are opportunities for open dialogue between all parties who have an interest in the LG&E Gas Storage Area



located at the Garrison. Five working groups were identified during the February meeting: Energy Resilience (including gas storage and forecast of plans); Security Concerns; Land Acquisition Documents (showing chronology); Environmental Requirements (state and Federal); and Coordinate Range/Training Plans for Troops. The working groups are expected to report out at this meeting. (4/20/18)

**May 16 – 17. BLM-AK.** The Resource Advisory Council will meet in Fairbanks. The agenda will include updates on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, the Greater Moose’s Tooth 2 project, and the proposed Willow Development. There will be updates on current planning efforts, such as the Road to Ambler Mining District Environmental Impact Statement and the Bering Sea-Western Interior and Central Yukon Resource Management Plans. Five of the council’s subcommittees will present their reports on placer mining, recreation, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Council members will receive an overview on Alaska subsistence; Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) including the Northwest Boreal LCC, Western Alaska LCC, and Aleutian Bering Sea Islands LCC; and explore partnership opportunities with local, regional, state, and federal entities. The council will also hear intertribal coalition presentations from the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Kuskokwim Fish Intertribal Commission, and Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission. The Federal Register meeting Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1939

**[NEW] May 16 – June 13.** Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 required Federal land managers to designate “energy corridors” on lands in the eleven contiguous western states. The Sec. 368 corridors are for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines as well as electric transmission and distribution lines. As part of the corridor designation process, Federal agencies were required to complete environmental reviews and incorporate the corridors into existing land use plans. In 2009, several non-profit organizations filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court alleging that in designating the corridors agencies did not comply with the Energy Policy Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and other related laws. The parties negotiated a settlement agreement that directs the agencies to periodically review corridors on a regional basis. These reviews are now moving forward, and stakeholder workshops are scheduled for Region 2 & 3 energy corridor reviews as follows: May 31 in Albuquerque, NM; June 4 in Phoenix, AZ; June 6 in Reno, NV; June 11 in Grand Junction, CO; and June 13 in Richfield, UT. A press release announcing the workshops is being prepared for posting on May 16. (4/26/18)

**May 17. BLM-CA.** Bishop Field Office staff, state and federal natural resource management agencies, and Native American tribes from eastern California and western Nevada will attend the quarterly Bi-State Tribal Natural Resources Committee Meeting in Walker, Mono County, Calif. The committee allows information sharing about resource issues. (4/4/18)

**May 20. BLM-UT.** The comment period for the Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone Environmental Assessment ends. During the comment period, the field office will host a public meeting to provide information and answer questions regarding the proposal. The Cedar City Field Office released the EA for public review and comment on April 20. The EA analyzes the effects of leasing approximately 5,564 acres of public lands for solar energy development in Beaver County, Utah. Sensitive species that may be found in the project area include Kit Fox and Burrowing Owl. Mapped greater sage-grouse habitat is adjacent to the southern and eastern boundaries of the proposed lease areas. According to the Solar PEIS analysis, the solar energy

zone encompasses portions of three perennial grazing allotments (13 percent of the Minersville 4 Allotment; two percent of the Minersville 5 Allotment; and 10 percent of the Minersville 6 Allotment). These allotments are used by nine permittees and support the production of 4,986 AUMs of forage per year. The Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone was designated as part of the 2012 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. (2/21/18)

#### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

On May 8, BOEM expects to publish the List of Restricted Joint Bidders, which is a semi-annual list, in accordance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The *Federal Register* notice is currently with ASLM for surnaming and approval. This list will apply to lease sales held from May 1, 2018, through October 31, 2018. (4/13/18)

By May 8, BOEM expects to publish a Request for Competitive Interest for an area proposed to be used for a right-of-way (ROW) project called Atlantic Link. Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc. filed an application on May 31, 2017 (revised August 22, and September 26), for a ROW grant in support of a proposed project connecting onshore wind and hydro power in Canada to the Massachusetts market via a 350 mile HvDC submarine cable traversing the OCS. Emera, parent company to Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc., has recently expressed an interest in slowing down their project timetable. The notice is in surnaming with ASLM.

**[NEW]** On May 8, BOEM will host a public meeting in West Long Branch, NJ to gather information regarding fisheries usage of the NY Bight. (4/27/18)

On May 9, BOEM will host a New York Bight Task Force Meeting in Newark, NJ. The purpose of the task force meeting is to provide an update on the commercial offshore wind leasing process, present preliminary data analysis that will inform the Area Identification process, and provide the states of New York and New Jersey with an opportunity to update the task force on state initiatives and activities. Invitees to this task force meeting will include the NY and NJ task forces, as well as to up to two elected representatives or designated officials from the Governor's offices of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia to attend and participate. (4/6/18)

The week of May 21, BOEM expects to participate in a tentative meeting with the State of California and DOD regarding offshore wind off the coast of California. (4/6/18)

In May 2018, BOEM and BSEE expect to publish a Notice of Availability for a joint draft Programmatic EA for routine and ongoing oil and gas activities occurring in the Southern California Planning Area. The Final Programmatic EA should be complete by the end of FY 2018. (4/6/18)

#### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

**The Arctic Rule:** The ASLM is currently reviewing documents to plan a path forward for potential revisions to the Arctic Rule.

**[UPDATE] The Proposed Production Safety Systems Final Rule (PSSR) (AA37)** has cleared the Solicitor's office and is caught in a "on again off again" review by OMB. Final decisions are pending however; the confusion at OMB will result in this rule not being able to be submitted to the office of the Federal Register as scheduled on Friday April 27. Once we get further information from OMB on their desire to review, we will provide updates. The Production Safety Systems Revision team worked with Solicitor's Office to develop final edits to the Final Rule. BSEE briefed OMB on the Final Rule on **April 24th**.

**[UPDATE] Consideration of Pilot Program for ACT Program (Accelerating Compliance Together)** - BSEE is currently undertaking a deep dive on data of compliance times with incidents of non-compliance and will be requesting a briefing to the ASLM on this innovative concept to radically accelerate compliance with incidents of non-compliance without costing a single taxpayer penny. A PowerPoint was previously provided for ASLM awareness. A briefing has been rescheduled for **May 9** with ASLM. We look forward to providing the details on this innovative approach.

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

On May 11, 2018, Federal defendants will respond to the Plaintiff's motion for summary judgment in the U.S. District Court of Montana. On June 8, 2017, Wild Earth Guardians and Montana Environmental Information Center submitted a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief claiming that OSMRE failed to adequately analyze the indirect impacts of transportation, failed to adequately analyze greenhouse gases and impacts to the air from coal combustion, failed to consider cumulative actions, and failed to prepare an EIS for the October 2016 mining plan modification decision at the Spring Creek Mine. Petitioners also allege that the mining plan modification approval was unauthorized because the lease was invalid due to an alleged delegation of authority violation. (2/15/2018)

Pending state approval of the permit revision, on or about May 15, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Falkirk Mine's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Falkirk Mining Company's Falkirk Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in McLean County, ND. The mine employs 412 full-time employees and 118 temporary employees and produces approximately 8 – 8.5 million tons of coal per year. (3/15/2018)

On or about May 18, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Bull Mountains Mine No. 1's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Signal Peak Energy's Bull Mountains Mine No. 1 is an underground coal mine located in Musselshell and Yellowstone Counties, MT. The mine employs 260 people and produces approximately 6 – 10 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/15/2018)

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

##### Bureau of Land Management

**May 21 – 22.** BLM-UT will host a Resource Advisory Council meeting in Salt Lake City. Agenda items include BLM updates from the State Director, fire dispatch study implementation, 2018 fire season outlook, updates on planning process Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears National Monuments, Watershed Protection Task Force, Mountain Accord, Washington County

issues, Lake Powell pipeline project, recreation fee proposals, and planning updates. The public comment period will take place on May 22. The Federal Register meeting Notice published on April 2. (3/7/18) DTS 1945

**May 23.** BLM-MT/DK. Indian Outreach Meetings will take place in Mandaree, North Dakota. Representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, BLM, Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), and Office of Special Trustee for American Indians will be available to answer questions by individual Indian Mineral interest owners on mineral ownership, development and royalties. ONRR will mail a meeting notice reminder to individuals living locally and advertise in local media. This is not an event where media or general (non-allottee) public have been invited. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 23.** The Annual Making a Difference National Volunteer Awards ceremony will take place at 1:00 pm Eastern Time in Room 5071 at the Main Interior Building (MIB). Winners have been selected and all states with winners have been informed. An IB formally announcing this year's honorees will be posted in early May. Awardees will travel to their state offices to receive their awards. Each state office hosting a winner will be live-linked through the video teleconferencing system to MIB for the ceremony. Chris McAlear, Assistant Director for National Conservation Lands and Community Partnerships, is tentatively slated to serve as Master of Ceremony. Awards are presented at individual state offices by state leadership in those offices. (3/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 24.** BLM-OR/WA. The Upper Willamette Field Office, Northwest Oregon District, is proposing timber harvest using regeneration harvest and commercial thinning across approximately 1,160 acres within the Harvest Land Base—Moderate Intensity Timber Area land use allocation. The proposed project is located east and south of Cottage Grove, Oregon within the Row River 5th field watershed. This project is being analyzed in the Row River Timber Management Environmental Assessment (EA), expected to be released for public review in May 2018. This EA analyzes harvesting approximately 50,000 MBF (thousand board feet) of timber expected to be sold between fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2023. This project is designed to conform to the Northwestern and Coastal Oregon 2016 ROD/RMP. The BLM expects that timber sale decisions analyzed in this EA will be protested and appealed. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 30.** BLM-ID. The Bruneau Field Manager will issue a decision that designates 1,521 miles of routes as part of a comprehensive travel management plan within the Bruneau Field Office. In 2009, the Owyhee Public Lands Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The Canyonlands East Travel Management Plan is the first of five travel management plans that are underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. Local, state, and federal agencies and NGOs are generally supportive of it. The one exception is motorcycle groups. It is unknown whether they will appeal. (2/7/18)

**[UPDATED] May 30.** BLM-ID. The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) Manager will be issuing a travel management plan decision for the southern portion of the NCA. In 2009, the Owyhee Public Lands Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management plans on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The NCA South Travel Management Plan is the second of five travel management plans that are

underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. According to the Boise District Office, counties are generally okay with it. However, Idaho Parks & Recreation (state) and some motorized groups may appeal it. (2/7/18)

**[NEW] May 30.** BLM-NM is proposing to hold a public event to celebrate the recent donation of lands to the BLM that allowed for public access into the Sabinoso Wilderness. The event, tentatively scheduled for May 30 (pending approval), would include a small ceremony and organized hikes for VIPs and the public in the Wilderness. Invitees would include Secretary Zinke, Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Congressman Ben Ray Luján (D-NM), Wilderness Land Trust President Brad Borst, and BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed. (4/26/18)

**May 31.** BLM-CO. The Southwest District has prepared a Notice of Proposed Meeting for the Southwest Resource Advisory Council. Pending publication in the Federal Register, the meeting will be held in Fruita. Planned agenda items include training members on their participation on the Recreation Resource Advisory Council, recreation fee proposals, the close-out of the Dominguez-Escalante Advisory Council and forming a subcommittee dedicated to partnership-based trail building in the Grand Junction area. The Federal Register Notice package is currently being routed in the WO. The Southwest District is planning on a May 1, 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/4/18) DTS 2068

**In May.** A report to Congress on efforts to conserve Greater Sage-Grouse, restore sagebrush habitat, and implement a native seed strategy was due July 4, 2017, per direction from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017. The report has been prepared in final draft, but submission to ASLM has been delayed pending determination of the degree to which grants and agreements will be utilized going forward to achieve the purposes of the native seed strategy. (4/4/18) DTS 11379

**In May.** SO 3359 implements Executive Order 13817, which aims to reduce the vulnerability to disruption of critical mineral supply among other stated goals. The Order requires BLM to submit to the Secretary, within 60-days, a report with a list of recommendations to: 1) improve access to lands to explore for and develop critical minerals; 2) streamline permitting and review processes related to critical minerals development; and 3) otherwise increase critical mineral discovery, production, and domestic refining. The BLM has drafted a report with 13 recommendations across these categories that is under review in Washington. (3/30/18)

**In May.** At the request of the Department, the BLM prepared for the Office of Management and Budget a report on hardrock mineral royalties regimes in the United States. The report discusses options for a Federal royalty on hardrock minerals, litigation risks, legislative history, and provides additional background information. The report is under review in the BLM Washington Office. (3/30/18)

**In May.** BLM-AK will submit a Federal Register Notice for revocation of five Public Land Orders (PLOs), which will open approximately 229,632 acres in the Goodnews Bay region for surface entry, mineral exploration and mining; it will also make the state selections effective, and allow the BLM to move forward in conveying lands to the State under their Statehood entitlement. The PLOs were issued in 1972, pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement

Act Sec. 17(d)(1), and were recommended for revocation in the 2008 Bay Resource Management Plan. The Notice is under review at the BLM Alaska State Office. (3/1/18)

**[NEW] In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona State Office has received five Expressions of Interest (EOI) for oil and gas leasing between October 2017 and January 2018. The EOI's total 6,761 acres and are located in Apache and Navajo counties. The adjudication has been completed, and three parcels have been created and forwarded to the Safford Field Office for National Environmental Policy Act analysis. (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office has been requested to transfer 3,380.69 acres (surface and subsurface) to the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) through a noncompetitive direct sale for the appraised fair market value. The subject parcels are located on the western and southern margins of the Gila River Indian Reservation in Maricopa and Pinal Counties in Arizona, south of the Phoenix metro area. These lands are isolated from other BLM lands in the area and were identified as suitable for disposal in the BLM's Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. The GRIC is very interested in acquiring these lands because of their adjacency to its reservation and the presence of cultural resources significant to them present on these lands. The non-competitive direct sale is being pursued at the request of the GRIC, which was formally submitted in 2015. The BLM Arizona Land Tenure Steering Committee recommended pursuing this action in May 2015; this recommendation was approved by the Arizona State Director. The BLM has completed an appraisal to determine fair market value of the parcel (\$9,620,000) and is in the process of notifying other potential interested and qualified parties about the sale. (4/4/18) DTS 1804

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona Strip Field Office is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), in order for the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline project to proceed. The analysis in the RMP amendment will subsequently be incorporated into an associated environmental impact statement (EIS) for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project being completed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The FERC is the lead agency to complete the EIS for the Pipeline Project; the BLM is a cooperating agency. The Utah Division of Water Resources is the Project proponent. Although only a small portion (900 acres) of the management area is affected, the BLM must complete the RMP amendment to address inconsistencies between the decisions in the current RMP, the proposed route for the Pipeline, and an existing utility corridor designated. Approximately 1.5 miles of the proposed Pipeline would run through the Kanab Creek ACEC. This information will be incorporated into the FERC's EIS for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. (4/4/18) DTS 1860

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office will move forward with release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement related to development of the proposed Sonoran Valley Parkway Project (SVPP) by the City of Goodyear in Maricopa County, Arizona. This project provides the opportunity to create immediate and future jobs, help bolster the growing local economy, and reduce emergency service response times. The City has approximately 77,000 residents and is part of the Phoenix-metropolitan area, which has approximately 4.5 million residents. The SVPP will provide needed enhancements to infrastructure as the area is projected to experience significant growth. The proposed project

would involve approximately 475 acres of BLM-managed public lands. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 1775

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-AZ. BLM Arizona will publish its Record of Decision (ROD) for Recreational Target Shooting in the Sonoran Desert National Monument. A March 2015 federal court order required the BLM to re-analyze impacts of recreational target shooting on the monument. The ROD, which was developed after extensive public outreach and analysis, preserves access for target shooting on nearly 90% of the monument, while ensuring public safety in the area of heaviest family recreation use—the Juan Bautista de Anza Recreation Management Zone (RMZ). The ROD was filed with U.S. District Court in Phoenix on March 5, 2018, and the announcement will coincide with publication of the Notice of the Availability in the Federal Register. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1976

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CA is preparing an Environmental Assessment and Resource Management Plan Amendment for a proposed transmission and water pipeline right-of-way (ROW) associated with the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Project in Riverside County. In 2014, the Eagle Crest Energy Company obtained a 50-year license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to construct, operate, and maintain the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project. The BLM is processing a ROW application associated with the 1,300-megawatt hydroelectric project that includes a 500-kV transmission line and a 12-inch water pipeline energy transmission. The project is estimated to create 4,300 jobs during construction and will contribute to the state's energy portfolio. The City of Palm Springs and Cathedral City, environmental groups, and Colorado River Indian Tribes have voiced concern over the project, including its proximity to Joshua Tree National Park, impacts to critical or endangered desert species, and potential impacts to water, and cultural and historic resources. The project is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18)

**In May.** BLM-CA anticipates approval to publish a draft Notice of Availability of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Land Use Plan Amendment for the revised technology of the approximately 4,200-acre Palen Solar Photovoltaic Project, a 6.7-mile generation intertie transmission line connecting the project to the SCE Red Bluff Substation. The Final Supplemental EIS analyzes the consequences of granting a right-of-way to construct, operate and maintain a 500-megawatt solar photovoltaic facility near Desert Center, Riverside County. The project would create approximately 1,145 peak construction jobs and up to 12 full-time operational jobs. The project is controversial as it has attracted media attention and environmental groups have expressed concerns about the impacts to surface hydrology, groundwater, biological resources, visual resources, and air quality. Congressional interest includes Sen. Harris (D-CA), Sen. Feinstein (D-CA), and Rep. Ruiz (D-CA-36). State interest includes Gov. Jerry Brown and staff. Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1968

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of four parcels totaling 6.72 acres to the City of Black Hawk in Gilpin County. The adjacent, surrounding lands are primarily owned by the city and they intend to use the parcels for infrastructure, recreation and open space. The parcels are currently segregated from the 1872 Mining Law. The segregation will expire May 5. The proposal is not considered controversial. The potential for controversy would increase if the

segregation period expires due to the possibility of nuisance claims being filed on the parcels, which would interfere with the city's plan. RGFO is planning for a spring 2018 (before the segregation expiration, pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. Revisions to the NORA and the DOI briefing paper, as well as parcel maps were sent to Acting Senior Policy Advisor Kevin Oliver on April 11. (2/7/18)

**[NEW] In May.** BLM-CO. The Uncompahgre Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its preliminary environmental assessment for Gunnison Energy's North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan near Paonia. The proposal includes developing 35 Federal oil and gas wells on five well pads, new or upgraded access roads, and new gas and water gathering lines on Federal and private lands. The project would produce approximately 700 billion cubic feet of natural gas over 30 years. (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office is planning to issue a decision on a proposal to expand the Fourmile Trail System outside of Buena Vista. Community-led meetings were held from December 2016 through February 2017 to develop the proposal, which includes ten miles of new motorized and non-motorized trails totaling approximately 18 miles. Concerns from ranchers, wildlife managers and private property owners were considered when the proposal was developed. Since 2002, the Fourmile Trail System had had several routes constructed, along with a series of trail improvement projects. (4/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Rocky Mountain District and Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with representatives from Senator Gardner's staff to discuss recreational mineral collection in the Cache Creek Placer Area. BLM acquired Cache Creek – a 2,160-acre parcel – in 2000 through the Land and Water Conservation program. The Cache Creek Placer Area Management Plan, approved February 2016, requires individuals to obtain a Special Recreation Permit to collect minerals recreationally in Cache Creek with stipulations defining allowed uses and locations, as well as prohibited acts to prevent resource damage. While mineral deposits exist on the property, and there is interest in claim staking in the area, the parcel is not open to the General Mining Law of 1872 since it was acquired post-FLPMA. The meeting date was originally scheduled for March 26 and postponed due to scheduling conflicts. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. BLM Colorado is preparing a Notice of Proposed Reinstatement for Contex Energy's terminated oil and gas lease (COC77678). The lease is located in Archuleta and La Plata counties, totaling approximately 1,920 acres. The lease was terminated on June 1, 2017 because Contex Energy failed to pay rental fees on time. If approved, the lease would be reinstated with an increased royalty rate and rental fee. BLM Colorado is planning for a May 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its proposal to use bait and/or water trapping as the preferred method for future removal of wild horses from the Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area. The proposal includes continuing to treat mares with fertility control to slow population growth. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 35 and 65 animals. The BLM estimates the Spring Creek Basin herd is at the high AML for the HMA. (4/4/18)



**In May.** BLM-ES is working with the U.S. Coast Guard on a withdrawal revocation package for Lot 22 of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA), Florida. The BLM is the primary administrator of the 120-acre ONA, engaging in shared stewardship of the site in collaboration with local partners. The U.S. Coast Guard submitted a Notice of Intent to Relinquish Lot 22 (16.41 acres) to the BLM in June 2017. Lot 22 includes the lighthouse, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and receives more than 75,000 visitors annually. The BLM is currently in the suitability determination phase of the relinquishment, which includes an environmental assessment, preparation of a suitability report, completion of a NEPA compliance document, and publication of a Notice in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM MT/DK. The Butte Field Office is conducting prescribed burns as part of the vegetation restoration project in the Iron Mask Planning Area of Broadwater County, Mont. This effort continues despite a recent story in the Helena Independent Record that Native Ecosystem Council (NEC) and Alliance for the Wild Rockies (AWR) have filed a Complaint for Injunctive Relief in U.S. District Court seeking to halt the project. The BLM has been formally served with the complaint. The Butte Field Office is working with the DOI Solicitor's Office and Department of Justice to prepare a response. Both NEC and AWR filed administrative protests and appeals with OHA and IBLA on these same actions, but did not prevail in that review process. (3/30/18)

**In May.** BLM-MT/DK. The Lewistown Field Office is preparing a Notice of Realty Action for Federal Register publication announcing the BLM's classification of 80 acres at Bynum Reservoir in Teton County, Mont., as suitable for conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The Federal Register Notice will also inform the public that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has applied to have the land conveyed from the BLM to MFWP. MFWP has maintained a fishing and recreation access site on Bynum Reservoir for over 20 years with a right-of-way from the BLM. The BLM Lewistown Field Office will convey the 80 acres to MFWP under the condition that the State will never sell the land or change its current recreational use; otherwise the land will return to the BLM. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-NV expects to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with mineral segregation for the proposed Yellow Pine Solar Project in Clark County. The proposed project includes 9,290 acres of BLM-managed public lands 32 miles west of Las Vegas and 10 miles southeast of Pahrump, Nev. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1722

**In May.** BLM-NV. The Ely District will release the Final EIS for the Gold Rock Mine Project. The BLM will not issue a final decision on the proposed project for a minimum of 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The proposed project would add 300 direct jobs during construction and 150 to 250 direct jobs during peak mining operations. The project is located 50 west of Ely and 30 miles southeast of Eureka in rural White Pine County, Nevada. White Pine County and Eureka County are supportive of the project and the local rural economic development it will bring. Local livestock grazing permittees have expressed concern about the loss of forage within the fenced mine area, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife has expressed concerns about the project in regard to impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse and crucial mule deer winter habitat. The mining company has

included voluntary mitigation to reduce these impacts. The Notice is under review in Washington. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-NM. The Carlsbad Field Office expects to publish the Notice of Availability (NOA) for its Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, outlining the BLM's long-term "landscape-level" plans and goals for public lands in Lea, Chaves, and Eddy Counties. The planning area includes approximately 2.1 million acres of Federal surface land and 3 million acres of BLM-managed mineral estate in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties. The NOA is under review in Washington D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 2012

**In May.** BLM-OR/WA. The OR/WA State Office will be requesting a signature of concurrence from the Principal Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management, and Budget for the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Selected Remedy of Operable Unit 1 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) cleanup of the Formosa Mine. The BLM is a co-lead with the Environmental Protection Agency for the Formosa Mine CERCLA cleanup, and are working together under a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed in March 2018. The Formosa Mine is located near Roseburg, OR. The remedial action of consolidating and capping mine materials will protect human health and the environment by eliminating or reducing exposure of mine materials to water and oxygen through containment, thus mitigating the migration of contaminants (cadmium, copper, and zinc) affecting surface waters at the site. It will also preventing human exposure to soil contaminated primarily with arsenic in localized areas at the site. The Concurrence Memorandum will be circulated for surname by the BLM Director and transmitted to the DOI Office of Environmental Policy & Compliance for further routing. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT is considering the non-competitive, direct sale to PacifiCorp of 200 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to PacifiCorp non-competitively due to the lack of public access and their ownership of the surrounding lands, pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-3(a)(4). Conveyance of the identified public lands would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT is considering the modified competitive sale of 160 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value to the adjacent landowners Hunter Prep Plant LLC, Ross Huntington, and Clinton Price. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to the adjoining land owners on a modified competitive basis, with Hunter Prep Plant, LLC as the designated bidder, giving them the right to meet the highest bid pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-2(a)(1). Conveyance of the identified public land would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office intends to issue a decision authorizing a Special Recreation Permit to Pinnacle Helicopters LLC for a shuttle service for river clients from the Canyonlands Field Airport to Mineral Bottom Airstrip. The proposal has been controversial due to potential impacts to other visitors' experiences, and an unrelated proposal from the same company to also conduct helicopter shuttles in Blue John Canyon, immediately south of

Canyonlands National Park and near the Horseshoe Canyon Wilderness Study Area managed by the BLM Richfield Field Office. That request garnered regional media attention. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT expects to approve a Final Environmental Impact Statement for Alton Coal, which seeks to expand its existing mine by leasing federal coal on 3,581 acres of public and private lands near Alton, Utah. The Alton Coal Tract contains 59.6 million tons of bituminous coal, and the proposed action could extend mining operations by 25 years. The lease sale needs to occur by summer 2018 for continuous operations. (2/21/18) DTS 2032

**In May.** BLM-UT. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Notice of Intended Disposition will be published in four newspapers in the Four Corners region for two weeks. Publication will communicate BLM-Utah's intention to repatriate to the Hopi Tribe human remains and 4,121 associated funerary objects that were illegally excavated and/or disturbed in 2008 from Site 42SA9266 on BLM-administered lands in San Juan County, Utah. This notice is under review in Washington. (3/23/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT. The Utah State Director will transmit a Federal Register notice to WO-240 regarding a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) effort. This notice will correct a previous notice published in 2004 to update the minimum number of individuals from two archaeological sites in southwestern Utah based on updated osteological analysis. Publishing the notice in the Federal Register will be one of the final steps in the NAGPRA process to repatriate the remains of 12 individuals and thousands of associated funerary objects to Hopi Tribe. In accordance with the results of the tribal consultations, all of the human remains and funerary objects will be reburied on BLM-managed lands administered by the Kanab Field Office in Kane County, Utah. (3/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office will issue an EA for a 30-day public comment period. The EA analyzes a proposal from Grand County to create a small detention basin on public lands as part of a flood control project near the south end of Moab, Utah. Past flooding has affected local neighborhoods and U.S. Route 191 in this area. The construction of the basin will entail a minor reroute of an existing mountain bike connector trail. (4/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT expects to publish an NOA for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Enefit American Oil Utility Corridor Project in northeastern Uintah County. Publication of the NOA initiates a 45-day public waiting period pursuant to NEPA requirements of NEPA. The Final EIS analyzes Enefit American Oil's proposal to construct five utility ROWs along 40 miles south of Vernal, Utah. The notice is pending approval in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1817

**In May.** BLM-WY expects to publish the Notice of Availability for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Normally Pressured Lance (NPL) Project. The Final EIS is currently under review by Washington and BLM-WY needs approval of the NEPA before advancing the Federal Register package in compliance with WO IM-2018-028. The proposed project includes drilling up to 3,500 directional natural gas wells over a 10-year period on approximately 140,000 acres. The NPL project is projected to yield between 3.5 to 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and between 17.5 to 140 million barrels of oil over the estimated 40-year life of the project. Project revenues are estimated at \$17.8 billion with federal royalties

amounting to about \$2.2 billion, of which about \$1.1 billion would go to the State of Wyoming. The project would also bring about 954 full time jobs to the region during development. (2/21/18)

**[UPDATED] Late May.** BLM-ID. The Boise District is completing an environmental analysis to authorize the use of 18 herbicide active ingredients as authorized by the BLM in the 2016 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Aminopyralid, Fluroxypyr, and Rimsulfuron on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and the 2007 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The forthcoming decision will determine how noxious weeds and invasive plants will be managed on public lands within the Boise District. The Decision is expected to be signed in mid to late May, pending completion of Section 7 consultation. (3/20/18)

**Late May.** BLM-MT/DK. A March 23, 2018, order by the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana identified National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) deficiencies in the Miles City Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the Buffalo (Wyoming) RMP. The court directed the BLM and plaintiffs to attempt to reach an agreement no later than May 23, 2018, and to prepare an expedited schedule for preparation of a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for both RMPs. Due to the court-identified NEPA deficiencies, the BLM anticipates postponing the scheduled June 12, 2018, oil and gas lease sale for 217 nominated oil and gas lease parcels within the Miles City Field Office. The BLM expects to make a final decision on the postponement and make the decision public by the end of May. (3/30/18)

**Late May.** BLM-WY. The Buffalo Field Office will release the I-90 Corridor Travel Management Draft Environmental Assessment. The release of the Draft EA will initiate a public scoping period that will end in June or July. Two public meetings will also be held during this period, the dates of which have not yet been determined. On March 8, the BLM began issuing letters to affected landowners and grazing lessees, informing them of the BLM's desire to obtain easements and/or exchanges, which will assist the BLM in designating travel routes to provide easier public access to BLM lands for recreational opportunities. In the effort to be a good neighbor, the Field Office is respecting the demanding schedules of working ranches as it continues to work with them to determine their access needs and their interest in facilitating enhanced public access. The BLM has briefed county commissioners and congressional representatives in routine meetings. The goal of these letters is to open dialogue regarding potential easements/exchanges and come to mutually beneficial agreements with affected landowners. (3/1/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action for a direct sale of 7.55 acres to resolve a longstanding trespass issue. Anderson Summer Camp purchased property and associated buildings in Eagle County in 1979. In 2014, the camp discovered that some of their base and other buildings are located on BLM lands. They notified the BLM when they discovered this. The CRVFO is planning for a spring 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. (4/11/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will release a Draft Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Colorado River between Parshall and State Bridge for a 30-day public review period. The RAMP addresses alternatives to better manage increasing use in this area, which sees more than 90,000 float-boaters and anglers each season. Alternatives include adding unlimited day-use permits, expanding a developed campground and designating river campsites. (3/16/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Little Snake Field Office and Northwest District plan to announce a public scoping period in late April or early May for a summer bait-trap wild horse gather in the Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area (HMA). The proposed gather is under review in Washington, D.C. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 163 and 362 wild horses. The BLM estimates the population in the HMA exceeds 700 horses. The Field Office and district have been working closely with a local partner group—the Sand Wash Advocacy Team—to treat mares with fertility control to slow the population growth. (3/16/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office has prepared a Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement evaluating an exchange of certain Federal Lands for properties owned by Galloway, Inc., owners of the Blue Valley Ranch. Under the proposal, the BLM would convey approximately 1,489 acres of public land in Grand County to Blue Valley Ranch in exchange for 1,830 acres of privately held land in Summit and Grand counties. If approved the exchange would allow the BLM to improve public access, facilitate recreation and increase big-game winter range in the area. The field office is planning to publish in the Federal Register in spring 2018. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1955

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of 0.16 acres in Garfield County to adjacent landowners who inadvertently built part of their home on BLM-managed land. The CRVFO is planning for a spring 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is part of an IBLA case settlement to resolve this long-standing trespass issue. As part of the settlement, the landowners agreed to two easements across their private land to access BLM lands with no previous legal access. (3/7/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office will begin initiating the management plan for two parcels acquired in March 2017 through the Sutey Ranch Land Exchange after a Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. The Colorado River Valley Field Office is planning for a spring 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval). The planning effort will result in an amendment to the approved Colorado River Valley Resource Management Plan. The 557-acre Sutey Ranch parcel includes high wildlife value and high potential for recreation. The 112-acre Haines parcel is popular with mountain bikers in particular. There is significant community interest in this planning effort. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1999

**Early June.** BLM-ID. BLM Four Rivers Field Office is coordinating with Ada County regarding a county ordinance to eliminate overnight camping within an area of the county that includes BLM-managed lands in the Boise Foothills, within the Ridge to Rivers trail system north of Boise. This area has been getting more use in recent years by people setting up impromptu camps and/or squatting in trailhead parking lots and day-use areas. This county

ordinance would reduce conflicts with trail users, and Ada County expects that this will be in effect by June 2018. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] June 1.** BLM-ID. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have requested and funded an investigation into the 1873 boundary survey of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Specifically, the Tribes assert the easterly boundary of the reservation should have been 30 miles further east, resulting in a shortage of approximately 600,000 acres. The Cadastral Survey investigation has affirmed the 1873 locations of the boundaries, with only minor differences of interpretation of the controlling natural features. Finalization of the report is anticipated June 1, 2018. However, it is unlikely that the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will drop their claim for many reasons: First, all metes-and-bounds descriptions are subject to differing interpretations. Second, their claims have been refuted in the past and their pursuit of compensation has persisted. Third, the report will indicate several interpretations of the written description, with the final finding being that the 1873 surveyor applied one interpretation to the conditions on-the-ground, and that interpretation was acceptable to the Surveyor General. The appropriate time to raise a claim pertaining to boundary disputes is when the "error" is first discovered. (4/26/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-ES proposes transfer by Quiet Title Deed of a former railroad right-of-way (ROW) to the Village of Forsyth, Macon County, Illinois. The transfer was requested by the Village of Forsyth for use as a recreational trail, under the authority of 16 U.S.C. 1248 (National Trails System Act). The ROW is 200 feet wide and totals approximately 18 acres. This action has been reviewed extensively by the Pittsburgh Field Solicitor's Office and the Washington, D.C. Solicitor's Office. The transfer is supported by Illinois Congressman Rodney Davis (R-13th). (4/20/18)

**[NEW] June 4 – 8.** BLM-WY will submit an updated Public Land Order (PLO) for the withdrawal of the Johnny Behind the Rocks (JBR) Recreation Zone near Lander. The proposed PLO would withdraw and close the subject lands to location and entry under the United States Mining Laws, but not from leasing under the mineral or geothermal leasing laws, for a period of 20 years. The JBR Recreation Zone was designated in the 2014 Lander Resource Management Plan to encourage non-motorized recreationists to engage in horseback riding, hiking, trail running, wildlife viewing and mountain biking. The BLM has invested in developing a trails system, parking lot and trail information kiosk with the local Lander Cycling, United States Department Agriculture, Forest Service, Wind River Backcountry Horsemen, Wyoming Conservation Corps, Encana Corporation and the Fremont County Recreation Board. The current trails attract regular usage by local and national recreationists. The temporary segregation created by the proposed application published in the Federal Register on June 10, 2016 (81 FR 37634) will expire on June 9, 2018. The PLO needs to be published by this date. (4/26/18)

**[NEW] June 7.** BLM-CO will hold its quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The BLM is offering 64 parcels totaling approximately 58,694 acres in Jackson, Moffat, Rio Blanco and Routt counties. Approximately 30,898 acres are on Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, which could generate controversy. Oil and gas leasing and development in Colorado generated an estimated \$2.9 billion in economic output in fiscal year 2016. (4/24/18)

**[NEW] June 12.** BLM-UT will hold a quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The Color Country District posted the Notice of Competitive Lease Sale on April 26, 2018. The public protest period will end on May 7, 2018. The district proposes to lease four parcels totaling approximately 3,788 acres in Wayne, Sevier and Beaver counties, Utah. The June lease sale also includes eight parcels in the Vernal Field Office that were sold during the December 2017 oil and gas lease sale but for which timely payment was not made by the successful bidder. As outlined under 43 CF3 3120.5-3C, the BLM must consider re-offering the parcels at the next feasible lease sale. The Vernal Field Office completed a Determination of NEPA Adequacy based on the EA prepared for the December 2017 lease sale and the BLM is re-offering the eight parcels. (4/26/18)

**[UPDATED] June 14.** BLM-CA. The 90-day public comment period will end for the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft Land Use Plan Amendment for the West Mojave Route Network Project. The Draft Supplemental EIS addresses proposed solutions for adaptive and responsible travel management planning and recreational use — including off-highway vehicle access — within the West Mojave planning area, while protecting important resources. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] June 19.** BLM-AK. On April 20, BLM-Alaska published a technical correction adding a website for commenting on the Notice of Intent (NOI) (published April 20) initiating public scoping on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOI began a 60-day comment period that closes June 19. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis that is required before a lease sale can be held. An award was made to eMPSi, a third-party contractor, on April 18 to support EIS development. Public scoping meetings are tentatively scheduled for May 21-23 in Arctic Village, Kaktovik and Utqiagvik and May 29 & 30 for Fairbanks and Anchorage. (3/16/18) DTS 1996

**[UPDATED] June 20.** BLM-NV. The Secretary of the Interior is scheduled to sign the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 17 projects for funding. There are two Nevada signing event options: 1) Southern Nevada at Bureau of Reclamation for their Round 17 Capital Improvement Program (more than \$10 million at the dam); or 2) Northern Nevada at BLM-NV land acquisition (\$4.5 million - providing new recreation opportunity) and nearby fuels projects (\$5 million). The Executive Committee for SNPLMA requested the Secretary of the Interior approve \$78,002,276 of funding, including \$5 million for a Special Account Reserve and an additional \$3.2 million for SNPLMA Round 16B Craig Ranch Regional Park—a 20.57-acre acquisition project. SNPLMA funding advances the Secretary's priorities by creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt; sustainably developing our energy and natural resources; restoring trust and being a good neighbor; protecting our people; striking a regulatory balance; modernizing our infrastructure; achieving our goals; and leading our team forward. (3/23/18)

**[UPDATED] June 21.** BLM-ES will hold a competitive online oil and gas lease sale of 24 parcels, all of which are split estate with private surface. The combined parcels total 2,202.87 acres and are located in Cleburne and Van Buren Counties, Arkansas. The sale noticed was

published on April 10, beginning a 10-day protest period that ended April 20. No protests have yet been received. (4/11/18)

**June 27 – 28.** BLM-NV. The Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (MOSO RAC) proposes to meet in Caliente, NV. Agenda items include updates on the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area recreation fee business plan, utility and transmission corridors planning updates, wildlife management and a tour of the Lincoln County Trail System. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] June 30.** BLM-CA. Bakersfield Field Office staff will participate in a U.S. Forest Service-led public meeting on four Applications for Permit to Drill in the Sespe oilfield in Fillmore, Calif. The Forest Service is the lead federal agency conducting the NEPA and the meeting is expected to generate much public interest, including previous interest from U.S. Rep. Julia Brownley's (CA-26-D) office, due to the wells being in a national forest and near a California condor sanctuary. (2/9/18)

#### Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

**[UPDATE]** By late May, BOEM could issue permits for Atlantic G&G activities. In April, BOEM expects that NMFS will publish its Endangered Species Act Biological Opinion for eight Atlantic G&G permit applications under review by BOEM. In testimony on April 26, NMFS indicated it will issue the IHAs in a few weeks, and after the BiOp is complete. It will not issue an IHA for one of the applications, submitted by WesternGeco, as they have not completed the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) consultation for BOEM's permit process. BOEM's decision on the permits should take approximately three weeks after BiOp completion, and will include issuance of an EA for each permit. (4/12/18)

**[NEW]** In May 2018, BOEM expects to issue a decision on approval of a Site Assessment Plan for installation of a meteorological buoy to characterize the wind resource on Vineyard Wind's lease located offshore Massachusetts. The decision package has been prepared but is pending submission of appropriate supplemental financial assurance and annual rental payment before issuance. (4/27/18)

**[NEW]** In May 2018, Deepwater Wind is expected to submit a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) for their South Fork project located offshore New York. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for this COP is in surnaming. (4/27/18)

**[NEW]** On June 15, BOEM will meet with representatives from the State of Hawaii to discuss potential paths forward for the competitive planning and leasing process for offshore wind following a February 2017 response from DoD excluding much of the June 2016 Call for Information and Nominations Area as part of DoD's mission compatibility assessment. (4/27/18)

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

**[NEW]** By May 22, 2018, OSMRE will make available \$115M in AML Pilot Funds in accordance with the Consolidated and Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141). The recipients will include the six Appalachian States (Pennsylvania - \$25 million, Kentucky - \$25



million, West Virginia \$25 million; Ohio - \$10 million, Alabama - \$10 million; Virginia - \$10 million) and the Hopi, Navajo and Crow Tribes will also receive a total of \$10 million.

**[Update]** On or about May 23, OSMRE plans to submit the Sufco Mine's Greens Hollow Lease Tract mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. The Canyon Fuel Company's Sufco Mine is an underground coal mine located in Sevier and Sanpete Counties, UT. The mine employs 383 people and produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (4/12/2018)

On or about May 25, 2018, OSMRE plans to publish a notice of availability for the San Juan Mine Deep Lease Extension mining plan modification Draft Environmental Impact Statement in the *Federal Register*. A NEPA review meeting is scheduled with the Deputy Secretary and other departmental officials for May 3, 2018. The San Juan Mine is located approximately 4 miles northeast of Waterflow and 15 miles west of Farmington in San Juan County, New Mexico. The mine employs 360 people and currently produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/28/2018)

By May 30, 2018, OSMRE expects the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a lease for the Oklahoma Federal Lands: Pollyanna #8 coal mine permit revision. The applicant's existing coal reserves are expected to be depleted in less than 12 months; therefore, the additional coal reserve is needed to ensure continuous operations. BLM has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the coal lease on the expansion of the underground mine and is expected to have the draft lease completed in the upcoming weeks. With finalization of the leasing documents, OSMRE will be working on the development of a Mine Plan Decision Document (MPDD). Based upon OSMRE's close coordination with BLM during the development of the EA for the lease, we anticipate being able to adopt large portions of their EA for our MPDD. Future steps will include evaluation of the BLM EA for determination of NEPA adequacy, developing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EA, if needed, expected to be completed within 2 weeks following draft lease, followed by developing the EA and posting it for public review. Depending upon how much of the BLM EA that is adopted, the MPDD could be completed by July 31, 2018. (4/3/2018)

By May 30, 2018, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for Liberty #8. The new lease by application covers 1,620 acres of surface mining activities. OSMRE is expected to be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss with the mining company processing procedures, outline NEPA responsibilities, the development of a schedule associated with leasing and the process of a mining plan decision document. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

On March 6, 2018, OSMRE was notified by BLM of a new lease by application for Federal coal in Haskell County, Oklahoma. Evans-McCurtain Mine would include approximately 1,300 acres. BLM is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for Evans-McCurtain by May 30, 2018. The remaining reserves on the proposed lease are recoverable only by underground methods. Coal thickness

will dictate the use of continuous miner units or, possibly, a plow longwall. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

## **Awareness**

### **Bureau of Land Management**

**August 1.** BLM-MT/DK. The Western Montana District is proposing to complete a fee purchase acquisition using approved Land and Water Conservation Fund funding in the amount of \$1,025,000. The privately owned 307.57-acre parcel is located 23 miles south of Ennis, Montana. The parcel lies adjacent to BLM-administered lands (Dillon Field Office) within the Upper River Special Recreation Management Area along the Madison River. There would be increased access to 880 acres of BLM-managed lands, which would provide approximately 4.5 miles of additional access to the Madison River. The proposed date for this acquisition is Aug. 1, 2018. Willing landowners would like to complete the transaction as soon as possible. The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Madison County Commissioners support the BLM acquiring the private parcel. An appraisal, NEPA analysis, and Endangered Species Act work have been completed. No controversy is expected. (3/7/18)

### **Bureau of Offshore Energy Management**

[NEW] Marine Hydrokinetic offshore Oregon: BOEM is considering issuance of a lease to the Northwest National Marine Renewable Energy Center at Oregon State University (NNMREC-OSU) for the PMEC-SETS, a marine and hydrokinetic (MHK) test site offshore Newport, Oregon. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on the proposed project since it is a MHK project requiring a FERC license to operate. BOEM will be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document that will address both lease and license issuance. In Dec 2017, DOE awarded a \$40 million grant to PMEC-SETS to complete design, permitting and construction on the national wave energy testing facility. Oregon State has submitted a draft application to FERC and the region will be reviewing. (4/27/18)

[NEW] On March 23, BOEM submitted a memorandum summarizing recommendations to ASLM in response to a requirement of Secretarial Order No. 3359 “Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals” to submit to the Secretary a list of recommendations to improve access to lands to explore for and develop critical minerals; streamline permitting processes related to critical minerals development; and otherwise increase critical minerals discovery, production, and domestic refining. BOEM is also participating in the National Science and Technology Council Subcommittee on Critical and Strategic Mineral Supply Chains, which is developing a report in response to a requirement of Executive Order No. 13817 which was the impetus for S.O. 3359. BOEM currently awaits feedback from ASLM on the S.O. response and is drafting a contribution to the Subcommittee report for the E.O. (4/27/18)

As soon as possible, BOEM would like to publish the 2017 Comprehensive Inventory of OCS Oil and Natural Gas Resources Report to Congress. This report is required by Section 357 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. It directs the Secretary of the Interior to provide a report to Congress

within 6 months of the date of enactment (i.e., Aug. 8, 2005), with updates of at least every 5 years. This report is an update to the 2013 report. It is currently in surnaming with ASLM.

**[UPDATE]** On March 9, the public comment period for the BOEM DPP closed. BOEM has received approximately 1.86 million comment letters. BOEM is currently reviewing comments and working on the analyses for both the upcoming Proposed Program document and the associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. BOEM plans to brief ASLM on comment highlights and options guidance on May 8. (4/13/18)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND BUDGET**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On May 7 and 9-11, Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings. On May 8, Scott will be at NCTC in Shepherdstown, WV in connection with the Eagle Horizon exercise.

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)**

**[UPDATE]** On May 10, the Secretary is scheduled to testify before the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee. Deputy Assistant Secretary Olivia Ferriter and Office of Budget Director Denise Flanagan will support the Secretary at the table. (05/02/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)**

Early to mid-May, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will hold an introductory meeting with House and Senate congressional staff to review preparation for the current fire season and high-level Wildland Fire Management priorities. (04/25/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)**

**[NEW]** On May 8-9, the Deputy Director, Office of Restoration and Damage Assessment, will participate in a meeting with the State Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration (NRDAR) Alliance at the Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge in Laurel, MD. The Alliance holds bi-annual meetings in which representatives of individual states and other federal agencies involved in NRDAR convene to discuss NRDAR and spill response issues (no press). (05/02/2018)

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

**[UPDATE]** On or about May 11, based on the vacancy of the Human Capital and Diversity Deputy Assistant Secretary (HCD DAS) position and the Policy and Environmental Management (PEM) DAS position, PDAS Scott Cameron plans to sign a memo temporarily detailing the offices from the HCD DAS and the PEM DAS to the Deputy Assistant Secretaries that will formally inherit those offices once Congress approves DOI's FY 2019 budget request. The effective date of the detailing would be on or about May 28. (04/25/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)

The National Level Exercise (NLE) 2018 is continuing through May 10, 2018 and will examine the ability of all levels of government, private industry, and nongovernmental organizations to protect against, respond to, and recover from a major Mid-Atlantic hurricane. The functional and full-scale portions of NLE 2018 will include the activation of DOI alternate Site Charlie on May 7 and 8. (04/13/2018)

**[NEW]** From May 11-16 is National Police Week. On May 14, the DOI Memorial Service will be held in Washington, DC at the Main Interior Building (Secretary Participation TBD). On May 15, the 37th Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service is scheduled at the U.S. Capitol. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 8, the Federal Executive Board (FEB) of Minnesota will host the 41st Annual Civil Servant of the Year awards ceremony in Brooklyn Center, MN. 92 Federal employees will be recognized for outstanding service in the categories of Customer Service, Leadership, Unsung Hero, Innovation, and Excellence Beyond Expectation. Approximately 450 federal leaders and employees are currently registered to attend. Three DOI employees will be recognized during this program. (05/02/2018)

Early to mid-May, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will hold an introductory meeting with House and Senate congressional staff to review preparation for the current fire season and high-level Wildland Fire Management priorities. (04/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Early to mid-May, the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) in coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs is tentatively scheduled to rollout a Fuels/Active Management communications strategy. Work is ongoing with DOI Communications and the BIA to highlight Tribal successes stories. (05/02/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

On May 9, a report of the initial allocations of Hurricane Supplemental funding is due to Congress. The final version of the operating plans will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), after which the Office of Budget will prepare an allocation plan for Congress. (03/21/2018)

**[NEW]** The Department has nominated three projects and two programs for the 2018 Federal Energy and Water Management Award competition. The annual competition, coordinated by the Department of Energy Federal Energy Management Program, showcases projects, programs, and individuals across the Federal Government that promote energy and water efficiency and conservation, renewable energy implementation, and fleet management. Winners will be announced later in the summer and honored at a ceremony in October. This year's nominees include the National Park Service (NPS) for the NPS Bridge dashboard, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) for the MIB Energy Savings Performance Contract, the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Northeast Region Solar Renewable Energy Program, and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for the National Center Energy and Water Efficiencies. (05/02/2018)

#### Deputy Assistant Secretary - Human Capital and Diversity

On May 10, the Office of Personnel Management [final regulations](#) to implement the weather and safety leave provisions of the Administrative Leave Act of 2016 will go into effect. The Office of Human Resources is in the process of drafting guidance to explain the impact of the new regulations on the workforce. Under the regulations, agencies may grant weather and safety leave (paid time off) when it is determined that employees cannot safely travel to or from, or perform work at, their normal worksite, a telework site, or other approved location because of severe weather or another emergency situation. Under the statute, an agency will be unable, in most circumstances, to grant weather and safety leave to an employee who is a telework program participant and able to safely perform telework at the employee's home. This new provision will apply regardless of what is stated (or not stated) in the employee's telework agreement and in agency policies and agreements. (04/25/2018)

#### Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

**[NEW]** On May 15-17, the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) Executive Director will attend an invitation-only workshop hosted by the Moore Foundation and Conservation X Labs in Lake Tahoe, NV to envision technological solutions to barriers in freshwater conservation, including the threats posed by aquatic invasive species, such as zebra and quagga mussels. NISC's desired outcome of the event is one or more challenge prize competitions dedicated to finding technological solutions to some of the worst aquatic invasive species issues (no press). (05/02/2018)

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

**[NEW]** From June 18-20, PDAS Scott Cameron will be in Denver and Wyoming to participate in an Interior Business Center (IBC) building reopening with the GSA Administrator at the Denver Federal Center, participate in an employee listening session and related activities associated with implementing the PMB workplace harassment action plan, and visiting with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Defense (DOD), and Wyoming state and private partners on cooperative rangeland management of invasive weeds. (05/02/2018)

#### Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)

**[NEW]** On June 6, the Royalty Policy Committee will conduct its next public meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico. On June 5th, the sectors will meet to review their presentations for the public meeting, and on June 6th, the full Committee will meet to present recommendations, hold public comment, debate, and vote on recommendations to the Secretary. The Federal Register notice is being routed. (05/02/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)

From May 29 - June 1, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Wildfire Committee Meeting in Napa, CA to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. (04/18/2018)

*[NEW]* From June 4-7, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) National Indian Timber Symposium in Ocean Shores, WA to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. (05/02/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

From May 30-31, the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) will participate in the annual national meeting for Emergency Support Function (ESF) - Protection of Natural and Cultural Resources and Historic Properties (ESF #11) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Patriot's Plaza Building in Washington, DC. The meeting will focus on updates from each of the agencies that comprise ESF #11, as well as discussions on how to improve support to States, Tribes, and Territories during FEMA-led activations. The OEPC and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will be presenting on DOI's programs and capabilities that provide support to ESF #11. (03/28/2018)

Awareness

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

*[NEW]* The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently met with the Office of Wildland Fire, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service to discuss "Wildland Fire Fuel Management Activities" (Job Code 102653) in response to requests from the Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Chair and Ranking Member of its Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management. GAO plans to review: (1) mechanisms Federal land management agencies use to identify and prioritize fuel reduction projects and collaboration efforts with communities to identify and carry out fuel reduction activities; (2) agencies' self-assessment of their efforts to enhance community resilience; and (3) lessons recent wildland fire events offer on how agencies can best contribute to building community resilience. (05/02/2018)

*[NEW]* (Per GAO, distribution is highly restricted): The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently issued the draft GAO report "Animal Use in Federal Research: Agencies Share Information but Reporting and Data Quality Could be Strengthened" (GAO-18-459) in response to requests from the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies; other members of the House of Representatives; the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies; and other members of the Senate. The GAO reviewed several issues related to animals used in Federal research. While issuing no recommendations to the Department, GAO recommends that U.S. Department of Agriculture's

Animal and Plant Inspection Service clarify its reporting instructions and fully describe the potential limitations of the animal use data it makes available to the public. The response is due May 18. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently released the final report “Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation (ONHIR): Executive Branch and Legislative Action Needed for Closure and Transfer of Activities” (GAO-18-266) in response to requests from Chairman John Hoeven and Vice Chairman Tom Udall of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; Chairman Rob Bishop of the House Committee on Natural Resources; Senator John McCain; and Representative Lamar Smith. The GAO reviewed ONHIR's activities surrounding the relocation of the Navajo and Hopi Indians per the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act of 1974 and found ONHIR's relocation efforts continue three decades beyond the original deadline to complete operations. GAO issued four matters for congressional consideration, including that Congress provide successor agencies necessary authority to continue ONHIR's remaining activities upon closure. GAO also issued ONHIR five recommendations, including that it request a closure determination from the President and prepare necessary information to facilitate the transfer of its activities to a successor. ONHIR neither agreed nor disagreed with the five recommendations and stated it had either already taken steps or planned to once a successor identified. GAO asserts its recommendations to ONHIR remain valid. There are no recommendations to the Department; accordingly, no response is required. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently released the final report “Summary of Hurricane Sandy Audit and Inspection Reports and Management Advisories” (2017-FIN-057) summarizing the common themes and problems in award acquisition and grants management across all of its 19 Hurricane Sandy-related products the OIG issued over four years, ending July 31, 2017. The OIG determined that the Department did not have its own comprehensive emergency acquisition policy and guidance, during or since Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts. Rather than issuing recommendations, OIG issued suggested improvements. No response is required. (05/02/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently released the Verification Review of Recommendations 58 through 64 from the Report Titled “A New Horizon: Looking to the Future of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement” (CR-EV-MMS-0015-2010). The OIG concurs that all seven recommendations are resolved and closed. (05/02/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR WATER AND SCIENCE**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tim Petty will be in the DC area the week of May 7-11, participating in internal meetings and briefings. He will participate in continuity activities May 7-8, and will be in meetings at USGS in Reston the morning of May 9. On May 9, he will chair a meeting of the DC Leadership Group with the Yakima River Basin Integrated Plan stakeholders.

From May 6-12, USGS Deputy Director Bill Werkheiser will be in Reston, Va./Washington, D.C. On May 7-8, Bill will participate in the Eagle Horizon COOP exercise.

The week of May 6, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman will be in Washington, D.C. attending various meetings. On May 8, she will participate in the Eagle Horizon COOP exercise. On May 9, she will participate in the DC Leadership Group meeting with the Yakima River Basin Integrated Plan stakeholders. On May 10, she will meet with Senator Heitkamp.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

***[UPDATE]*** Reclamation has completed work to address comments on the Central North Dakota Environment Assessment. Reclamation released the draft EA for a second public comment period on April 17. The comment period was originally scheduled to close May 2, but by request from the State of Missouri it was extended to May 17. (3/26/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to announce the two projects selected to receive funding for drought contingency planning. Drought contingency planning funding is available for applicants interested in developing a new drought plan or updating an existing drought plan. The Assistant Secretary of Water and Science is reviewing the selected projects. (4/9/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the data app prize competition. Reclamation, in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, is seeking the development of an application framework to support electronic data collection and capture across a diverse range of data collection situations using mobile devices. (3/26/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the Long-Term Corrosion Protection of Existing Hydraulic Steel Structures prize competition. This prize competition sought ideas for long-term corrosion protection for large, hydraulic steel structures beyond the protection provided by available coatings and cathodic protection. (3/25/2018)

***[UPDATE]*** Between May 6 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to publish the remaining completed Rural Water Supply Program Appraisal Reports. Timing is based on when the notice is published in the Federal Register. A news release will be issued in conjunction with the notice. (1/9/2018)

***[NEW]*** On May 7, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing an Environmental Assessment for the Buena Vista Water Storage District (BVWSD) Northern Area Pipeline (NAP) Eastern Extension Project proposing to provide \$1,000,000 to the BVWSD for installation of 5 miles of pipeline which will connect the NAP Southern Extension to eastern areas of the BVWSD. (4/30/2018)



[**NEW**] On May 7, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the final environmental documents to disclose potential environmental effects associated with the issuance of contracts with districts and/or individual water users for conveying non-project water through Klamath Project facilities. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 7, Reclamation will host a media tour at the Teton Dam in Idaho site to discuss public safety and unauthorized access issues. Trespass and vandalism incidents have been increasing, and hazardous conditions are present throughout the site. (4/30/18).

[**NEW**] On May 7, Reclamation expects to release the final environmental assessment for Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District's proposal to transfer of up to 45,000 acre-feet of water, (up to 30,000 acre-feet Project Water and 15,000 acre-feet Base Supply), to the Colusa Drain Mutual Water Company annually from June through September, commencing with contract year 2018 and continuing through contract year 2022. The districts are located in northern California. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 11, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the draft EA for the City of Sanger, California Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Upgrade project. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 11, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the final EA and FONSI for the Tulare Irrigation District Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System Modernization project. The District is located in California. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 11, R&G Excavating, contractor for Klamath Irrigation District on the C Flume Replacement project, will work on site cleanup and the punch list. Placing crushed concrete over the buried siphon pipe will continue. The catwalk over the Lost River Diversion Channel will be placed. The C Siphon is located in Klamath Falls, Oregon. The C Siphon successfully conveyed water as canals were charged in preparation to convey non-project water. It is ready for the 2018 irrigation season as soon as water is available for the Klamath Project. Media interest is not expected. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] Between May 7 and 9, Alan Mikkelsen will be in the Klamath Basin meeting with stakeholders. His focus will be rolling out draft principles for a comprehensive basin-wide water and resource management plan. Media interest is expected. (4/30/2018)

Between May 7 and 25, Reclamation will publish the Title XVI and WIIN funding opportunity announcement. Updated criteria for this funding opportunity were previously published for public comment on March 12. Title XVI provides financial assistance to local water agencies for the planning, design, and construction of water reclamation and reuse projects. (4/9/2018)

[**NEW**] Reclamation's Rapid City Office in South Dakota is beginning the development of a new Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Belle Fourche Reservoir in cooperation with the South Dakota Department of Game Fish and Parks. The RMP will be the blueprint for future management and development at Belle Fourche Reservoir. The first step in the RMP will be

gathering public input thru a user survey, scheduled to begin in May, 2018. A news release is planned for May 7. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** From May 8-11, the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) will hold its spring conference, “2018: CA Water: Building for the Future,” in Sacramento. Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Austin Ewell and regional directors are scheduled to speak. ACWA is the nation’s largest statewide coalition of public water agencies with 430 public agency members responsible for 90 percent of the water delivered to California cities, farms and businesses. Media interest is expected. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 9, Reclamation will release final environmental documents for the proposed Mendota Pool Group one-year exchange agreements. Under the proposed one-year exchange agreements, groundwater pumped annually into Mendota Pool, minus losses, would be used by Reclamation to offset existing water contract obligations at the Mendota Pool. Reclamation would then reduce Central Valley Project (CVP) deliveries to the Mendota Pool by the quantity exchanged and make an equivalent amount of up to 25,000 acre-feet per year of CVP water available to the Mendota Pool Group and Peracchi lands in Westlands Water District for irrigation purposes via the San Luis Canal. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 8-9, Reclamation’s Curecanti Field Office will close the East Portal Road located east of Montrose, Colorado for installation of a cattle guard. The road will reopen on Thursday, May 10. A press release will be sent out around May 3. (04/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 9, The Yakima Basin (state of Washington) Integrated Plan (Integrated Plan) Implementation Committee will provide an update briefing for the Integrated Plan DC Leadership Group. Meeting / briefing will be chaired by Assistant Secretary for Water and Science (ASWS) Tim Petty; with presentations and updates being given by Implementation Committee members (in person) and Reclamation Regional staff (via phone). Since 2013, the ASWS has facilitated bi-annual meetings of the Implementation Committee and DC Leadership Group, helping to advance Integrated Plan projects using State, federal, and private funding and collaboration. (4/30/18).

**[NEW]** May 9. A draft news release from Reclamation’s Eastern Colorado Area Office announcing new requirements related to preventing the introduction of invasive species on trailered watercraft at Horsetooth Reservoir and Carter Lake boat ramps, located in Colorado, in the weeks to come. New requirements will mean that boat ramps will remain locked except when an inspector is present. These protective measures are intended to prevent introduction and infestation of the lakes by invasive aquatic species, such as the quagga and zebra mussels. They would get this approved for release on May 9, 2018. We hope to do a joint news release after meeting with Larimer Parks Advisory Board the evening of May 8. The local newspaper usually has a reporter at the Board meeting. (4/30/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 10, Reclamation is planning to launch the Pathogen Monitoring for Potable Reuse – State 1 Prize Competition. This Reclamation prize competition is cosponsored by Xylem, Inc., in collaboration with the Water Environment & Reuse Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency, with technical assistance from the California State Water

Resources Control Board. Sponsors of the competition seek the development of improved monitoring techniques to protect public health and optimize the operations at water treatment facilities. Success could facilitate public and regulatory acceptance of direct potable reuse systems. (1/9/2018)

On May 10, Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office in Farmington, New Mexico will conduct the 43<sup>rd</sup> Project Construction Committee meeting for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. Agenda items will include reports on current construction contracts and ongoing design work and a review of overall project schedule and costs. Attendees will include representatives of the project participants (Navajo Nation, Jicarilla Apache Nation and City of Gallup), state, local, federal and Tribal agencies and entities, and interested community members. (04/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 11, Reclamation will release final environmental documents for the proposed East Bay treatment of weeds at Contra Loma Reservoir in California. Herbicide applications would be made by certified applicators using backpack sprayers, wands, drip lines or other suitable, non-aerial application methods. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 11, Reclamation will release final environmental documents on the proposed issuance of a 5-year Warren Act Agreement to Ivanhoe Irrigation District for the introduction and conveyance of up to 6,500 acre-feet per year of Kaweah River water in the Friant-Kern Canal in California. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 11, Reclamation will release final environmental documents on the proposed issuance of a 30-year Land Use Authorization to access, install, operate, maintain the solar cell energy generating project known as the San Luis Solar Project. The proposed project consists of three sites along the O'Neill Forebay on federal lands and is adjacent to the San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area in Gustine, Merced County, California. (4/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 12, Reclamation will participate in the Annual Spring Wings Bird Festival in Fallon, Nevada, with a Newlands Project information booth. The festival will have family events, educational workshops and outdoors activities. For more information: <http://www.springwings.org/>. (4/30/2018)

On May 12, Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office staff located in Farmington, New Mexico will volunteer their time by participating in the annual Navajo Lake C.A.S.T. event. Over 60 participants and 30 plus volunteers are expected for the day-long event, which includes volunteers and donations from several local, state, and federal agencies. Some FCCO staff members were recently interviewed by a local radio station to promote the event. The media is invited to attend. (04/23/2018)

On May 14, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office and the City of Durango will hold a celebration/dedication for opening Lake Nighthorse for recreation. On April 1, the City of Durango had a soft opening of Lake Nighthorse for a couple hours to non-motorized use. Lake Nighthorse is located near Durango, Colorado, and is part of the Animas-La Plata Project. The Western Colorado Area Office is working closely with the city on preparing to open to motorized use on May 15 and construction of additional basic recreation facilities. Local media

are interested in Lake Nighthorse and coordination between Reclamation and the media will continue. (3/09/2018)

On or around May 15, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the award of a \$5.9 million contract for the modification of Howard Prairie Dam in Southwestern Oregon. The awardee is the Natt McDougall Company of Tualatin, Oregon. (04/23/2018)

Between May 16 and 18, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman is scheduled to visit the Mid-Pacific Region. She will meet with stakeholders and tour some Central Valley Project facilities in California. (4/16/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected projects under the Drought Resiliency Project funding opportunity announcement. Through drought resiliency projects Reclamation will provide funding for projects that will help communities prepare for and respond to drought. (4/9/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected entities to receive funding under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. The funding was announced in an FOA this past fall. It provides funding to develop a watershed management group, fund an existing watershed group, complete watershed restoration planning activities, and design watershed management projects. (4/9/2018)

On May 16 and 17, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's Salinity Control staff will participate at the Colorado River Basin Salinity Council and Forum meetings at the Washington County Water Conservancy District Office in St. George, Utah. Upper Colorado Regional Director Brent Rhees, and Lower Colorado Regional Director Terry Fulp have been invited to both meetings. The purpose of the council meeting is to discuss and take appropriate actions regarding the following: Basin States Program created by Public Law 110-246, which amended the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974; responses to the Advisory Council Report; and other items within the jurisdiction of the council. Meetings are open to the public; media generally does not attend. A Federal Register notice announcing the meeting is being routed for Departmental review and approval. The notice is expected to publish on or near Thursday, April 26, 2018. (03/19/2018)

Around May 18, Reclamation will conduct a second negotiation session with the Sacramento (California) Suburban Water District on contract terms and conditions for a long-term Warren Act contract. The contract will be negotiated for the conveyance of up to 29,000 acre-feet of non-Central Valley Project water per year using excess capacity in Folsom Reservoir. A news release will be distributed in advance of the event. (4/23/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

In May, the USGS will publish an online Science Snippet about a trio of recently published papers that show how fish, macroinvertebrates, and algae are affected by chemical and physical stressors in streams. The studies are based on the 2013 Midwest Stream Quality Assessment, which focused on 11 Midwestern states, and show that there are no pristine streams in the region.

Chemical stressors, primarily nutrients and pesticides, and physical stressors, primarily excessive fine sediment and a disturbed riparian zone, have altered small streams and affected the number and diversity of fish, algae, and macroinvertebrates that call these streams home. (3/12/2018)

This week, the USGS will release a Scientific Investigation Report co-authored with the Bureau of Reclamation that compares and contrasts the two agencies' water-use information programs in the Colorado River Basin. The report also describes the legal drivers for each program, clarifies confusing terminology, compares the methods used, and contrasts the information reported by each agency. This detailed comparison shows how the different missions, programmatic drivers, and user communities of USGS and Reclamation lead to different approaches to water-use data collection, analysis, and reporting. Despite the differences, the program comparison presented in this report identifies opportunities for closer coordination and sharing of information between the two bureaus, as well as program components where inter-bureau collaboration can improve water-use estimate methodologies. (3/6/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

**[NEW]** ASWS Travel: AS/WS Tim Petty is likely to travel to the Columbia River Basin during the week of June 25-29, to participate in Columbia River Treaty discussions and potential site visits.

#### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

On May 21 through May 24, Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region will host a bi-annual Power Operations and Maintenance Workshop with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Discussion topics will include technical subjects related to hydro powerplant and pumping facilities operations, maintenance, and engineering activities; best practices; and lessons learned. The event will be held at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, Nevada. No press is expected. (3/12/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 22, the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group will host a webinar/conference call. A *Federal Register* notice is being routed for Departmental review and approval and will be published on May 4. Topics of discussion will include updates on current basin hydrology, the Adaptive Management Program budget and workplan for fiscal year 2019, possible experiments at Glen Canyon Dam this water year, the status of AMWG membership appointments, and other administrative items as needed. The webinar is open to media and the public. (3/26/2018)

On May 22, Reclamation will conduct a congressional briefing via WebEx, with the Idaho congressional delegation on Idaho water projects, operations and issues. (4/23/2018)

On May 23, members of the Lower Clearwater Exchange Project will be leading a tour of the Lewiston Orchards Water Exchange Project (Lewiston, Idaho) for Trout Unlimited and the Resources Legacy Fund with support from the Nez Perce Tribe, Reclamation and the Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District. Invitations have been extended to representatives from the offices of Sen. Risch, Sen. Crapo, and Rep. Labrador. The water exchange and title transfer are intended to benefit Snake River steelhead, protect natural and cultural resources important to the Nez Perce

Tribe, and provide a reliable water supply for the Lewiston Orchard Irrigation District patrons. (4/02/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement on the New Mexico Unit Project. The proposed project is part of the Central Arizona Project, authorized by the Colorado River Basin Project Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90-537, 43 U.S.C. Ch. 32, as amended by the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA, Pub. L. 108-451). Pursuant to the AWSA, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to contract with water users in New Mexico for water from the Gila River, its tributaries and underground water sources. Use of Gila River water under the AWSA is conditioned on satisfying various laws and agreements related to the use and exchange of Gila River water in New Mexico and Arizona. The NM Unit will divert Gila River water in New Mexico for this purpose. The AWSA provided funding to construct the NM Unit or, to develop other alternatives in southwestern New Mexico to meet demand. Reclamation and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission are joint lead agencies for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act and other related environmental regulations regarding the proposed Project. Issuance of the NOI will initiate the formal public scoping process associated with NEPA compliance. (3/27/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the *Federal Register*, to be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. The FR notice requests public comments on the Department's proposed decision to re-allocate Central Arizona Project non-Indian agricultural (CAP NIA) priority water consistent with a recommendation made to the Secretary by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) in January 2014. This process is in accordance with Section 104 of the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act (Public Law 108-451), which directed the Secretary to allocate to the ADWR up to 96,295 acre-feet of CAP NIA priority water; this water is to be held by ADWR under contract in trust for further allocation, until a reallocation recommendation is submitted by ADWR to the Secretary. In 2012, ADWR began the reallocation recommendation process, and on January 16, 2014, ADWR submitted its recommendation to the Secretary. As explained in the proposed FR notice, the Secretary proposes to make 46,629 acre-feet of the NIA Priority CAP water available under long-term contracts in the amounts and to the municipal and industrial entities identified in ADWR's recommendation. Reallocation of CAP NIA priority water would address the imbalance of water supply and demand in central Arizona by providing renewable water supplies to those entities with a projected demand/supply imbalance based on ADWR's evaluation criteria. (4/23/2018)

In late June, Reclamation, Klamath Irrigation District, R&G Excavating, Klamath County, and the Klamath Basin irrigation community will hold an event to celebrate the completion of the new C Siphon which will convey irrigation water across the Lost River slough and Wildcat Canyon. The event will celebrate the success of the two-year construction project and a decades-long effort from procuring funding to construction. Media interest is expected. (4/23/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

[**NEW**] On May 20, the USGS will announce a new Scientific Investigation Report that provides inundation maps and flood details following Hurricane Harvey for areas of eastern and coastal Texas. Hurricane Harvey was the most significant rainfall event in US history, according to an

upcoming USGS report. High water mark data, along with flood flow information from USGS streamgages, were used to create 19 inundation maps documenting the areal extent and depth of the flooding. In the immediate aftermath of Harvey, the USGS and FEMA initiated a cooperative study to evaluate the magnitude of flooding, determine the probability of occurrence and map the extent of the flood in Texas. USGS field crews collected 2,123 high-water marks in across southeast Texas. A news release is planned for Texas and the report will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. (4/26/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 21-24 USGS scientists will present genetic and disease research on bighorn sheep in Dinosaur National Monument (WY), Yellowstone National Park (WY, MT, ID), and Glacier National Park (MT and Canada) at the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council in Whitefish (MT). Bighorn sheep are an important species in our national parks and monuments, an important game species, and an important part of food webs. Research in Dinosaur National Monument is an assessment of habitat, movement, disease, and population structure that informs federal and state managers on the success of previous introductions and considerations for future monitoring and management. Research on Glacier National Park bighorns assessed effects of population size and habitat quality on social contacts and disease. Information on whether and how the bighorns in Glacier, Waterton Lakes National Park, and the Blackfeet Reservation are subdivided provides options for management in a disease event or to proactively reduce the likelihood of disease. This is especially important as a fire in 2015 may bring together two subpopulations that were previously semi-isolated (and thus buffered from disease). Research on genomic data from Glacier, Yellowstone National Park and other Western state populations will provide guidelines to management for sample sizes needed to describe the genetic health of their populations. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] On May 21, the USGS will be publishing a required Congressional report that summarizes USGS progress towards a national assessment of water availability and use. This National Water Census report, authorized by the SECURE Water Act (P.L. 111-11, Section 9508 (d)) (42 USC 10368), is the second in a series of reports to Congress that explains how the Water Census has progressed towards goals from 2013 to 2017. This is a congressionally mandated report that describes critical work the USGS has completed to understand, assess, and deliver information about water availability, as well as the collaboration and coordination with other agencies and organizations that are essential to the success of the National Water Census. (4/30/2018)

On May 22-23 USGS and USDA will convene a National Imagery Summit on behalf of the Federal Geographic Data Committee at the USGS HQ in Reston, VA. Invitations are being extended to over three-hundred Government-only attendees, composed of White House, remote sensing policy, and civil agency leaders who oversee U.S. land imaging operations. The event will be webcast to US government GIS and land management scientists and practitioners across the United States. The purpose of the Summit is to address emerging challenges in today's dynamic imagery marketplace, with a focus on shortcomings and conflicts in U.S. policies related to overhead data collection, data management, and the variety of roles served by U.S. Federal and State agencies in meeting public needs for remotely sensed data and applications. Attendees will discuss current and future national land imaging needs, the status of current national capabilities, and national collection and data management strategies. (4/24/2018)

[**NEW**] In mid-May, the USGS will highlight research on fish passage to assist migratory fish transit past man-made barriers and reach upstream spawning grounds. USGS fish passage research provides critical information needed for specialists to design and build effective fish passages that enable key species to get past dams, navigate waterways and complete migration cycles. These specially designed structures enable fish to bypass blocked waterways, giving migratory fish access to key spawning areas, nurseries and other crucial habitats. A USGS Feature Story is planned. (4/26/2018)

[**NEW**] In May, the USGS will highlight a new USGS Circular entitled “A snapshot of women of the U.S. Geological Survey in STEM and related careers.” Women’s participation rate in the sciences is still lower than men’s and relatively few women reach top scientific leadership roles. The USGS needs specialists from a growing variety of science and related fields to remain a science leader. Given that girls and women are underrepresented, it is logical to look to them to fulfill society’s growing need and demand for science. With the online release of this circular, USGS will embark on a long-term campaign to encourage and inspire students, particularly girls and young women from middle school through early career, to consider STEM careers, and to reach experienced female professionals for science and leadership positions in USGS. This will include an internal USGS and DOI communications component to honor, inspire, and celebrate women within the USGS. The circular will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. Printed copies will be available in June. A social media campaign is planned. (4/26/2018)

[**UPDATE**] On May 28, the USGS will announce a new study that characterizes land and water surface changes and identify underlying drivers of change throughout Alaska from 1984 to 2015 based on combined Landsat imagery and climate reanalysis data. The study identifies the percent of Alaska’s lands that changed during the last three decades, the ecoregion most affected, and the agent most responsible for the change. The study also discusses how increased air temperatures affect vegetation growth and health and water availability. The study will be published in *Global Change Biology* and a national news release is planned. (4/20/2018)

In May, the USGS will release a new Circular entitled “Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2015.” This report documents the national compilation of water use data issued by the USGS once every 5 years for the entire U.S. The report will present state-level water use data for the year 2015 and discuss long-term trends in water use. An accompanying data release of county-level data will be made available concurrently with the Circular. Also, a data visualization for the Circular and county-level data is being created. All three products will be released concurrently, and a news release is planned. (3/14/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 31, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee will hold a field hearing to review the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program. USGS has been invited to testify at the hearing, which is scheduled to take place at the Huntington Beach Council Chambers (California). Steve McCabe, NEHRP director at NIST, and possibly Frank Vernon from Scripps/UCSD are also scheduled to testify. (4/26/2018)



In May, USGS will highlight research that examined differential changes in the onset of spring across U.S. National Wildlife Refuges and North American migratory bird flyways. The study used indices of spring onset, the First Leaf Index and the First Bloom Index, as proxies of habitat change for the period 1901 to 2012 at three spatial scales: the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System; the four major bird migratory flyways in North America; and the seasonal ranges (i.e., breeding and non-breeding grounds) of two migratory bird species, Bluewinged Warbler and Whooping Crane. The results provide insight into how differential shifts in the phenology of disparate but linked habitats could inform local- to landscape-scale management strategies for the conservation of migratory bird populations. A Top Story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

[**NEW**] In mid-May, a workshop is planned to be held in Bozeman, Montana to support the Custer-Gallatin National Forest's Forest Plan Revision. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for May 16 and 17 and is being supported by scientists of the North Central Climate Adaptation Science Center. Involved partners and stakeholders include the U.S. Forest Service, Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee, Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative, The Wilderness Society, Minnesota State University, and the National Park Service. (5/1/2018)

[**UPDATE**] In June, the USGS will be highlighting remote sensing efforts underway. The first part will focus on a new research effort to survey water resources in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain from the air. Beginning in late February, the USGS began the first in a series of flights in Greenwood, Mississippi, to acquire large-scale airborne geophysical data in support of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain (MAP) Regional Water Availability Study, part of a groundwater availability study in the region. The USGS is working in partnership with multiple state agencies. The second is a UAS project in Colorado where the USGS will be testing a variety of noncontact sensors mounted on small, unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) to measure river metrics including velocity, top width, area, and discharge and compare these data to ground-based conventional streamgaging methods. A top story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

## **Awareness**

### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

[**NEW**] On April 27, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office was contacted by Deborah Uroda with Durango TV about water conditions in Navajo Reservoir and the San Juan River and lack of snowpack in the mountains and the expected drought this summer. In addition, Gary Harmon with the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, contacted this office about water conditions of the Aspinall Unit in Western Colorado. We are experiencing dry conditions and a forecast for low spring runoff. The latest runoff volume forecast for Navajo Reservoir projects 235,000 acre-feet of inflow between April and July, which is 32 percent of average. (04/30/2018)

[**NEW**] On April 30, Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office was contacted by Peter O'Dowd of National Public Radio in Boston, Massachusetts, who is interested in scheduling an interview on the drought along the Middle Rio Grande. This is based on the Reclamation news release issued with the release of our Annual Operating Plan. They specifically want to discuss the early drying and the potential for drying in the Albuquerque reach. This is all due to one of the lowest

snowpacks in the history of the project. The interview is tentatively scheduled for the week of May 1 at the local affiliate KUNM's studio. (04/30/2018)

**[NEW]** On March 21, Reclamation's Provo Area Office was notified by a Utah State Parks Manager at Red Fleet Reservoir that a 14-year-old boy had been apprehended after he had been observed throwing rocks containing dinosaur footprint impressions into the reservoir. Reclamation is considering whether to recommend prosecutorial action and assessing ways to protect the impressions in the future. (04/30/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Reclamation's Dakotas Area Office is preparing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Reclamation and the Province of Manitoba regarding the development of the Adaptive Management Plan for the Northwest Area Water Supply Biota Water Treatment Plant. The draft MOU was provided to the Province of Manitoba. Manitoba has provided initial comments back to Reclamation. These comments are currently being reviewed by the Solicitor's Office. (3/27/2018)

On April 19, Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office Deputy Area Manager Jim Wilber and Public Affairs Specialist Mary Carlson interviewed with Henry Fountain of the New York Times on the Annual Operating Plan for the Middle Rio Grande. The interview was based on a news release issued by Reclamation in mid-April when they held public meetings to release the plan. The forecast shows early and ongoing drying in the Middle Rio Grande and diminishing storage in our reservoirs through the summer. The interview was neutral. The reporter planned to talk to several other sources and didn't have a potential release date for the story. (04/23/2018)

On April 24, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's public affairs and water operations staff participated in an interview at Glen Canyon Dam with Arizona Public Media, a Tucson affiliate for National Public Radio. The focus of the interview is Lake Powell operations, power generation at Glen Canyon Dam, ongoing drought and Lake Powell's continued value to the western U.S. (04/23/2018)

As of April 23, The Bureau of Reclamation's Fresno Dam in Montana is experiencing sustained high inflows as a result of snowmelt runoff in the basin upstream of Fresno Dam. Inflows into Fresno Reservoir are decreasing and are currently estimated at 3,000 cubic feet-per-second. The current total release from Fresno Dam to the Milk River is approximately 3,400 cfs. The current reservoir level is 2576.4 feet, 1.4 feet above normal full pool level, 2575.0 feet. This elevation is the peak expected elevation based on forecasted inflows to Fresno Reservoir. Reclamation is advising local emergency management officials of these conditions for awareness only. Inflows are expected to remain much higher than average for the next week. In accordance with the Fresno Dam Emergency Action Plan, Reclamation is required to notify downstream emergency management officials anytime Fresno Reservoir releases combined with downstream tributary flow exceeds safe channel capacity. Minor to major flooding is occurring along the Milk River. (4/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Following coordination with his counterpart Assistant Secretaries, AS/WS Tim Petty provided a Decision Memorandum for the Secretary's consideration setting forth the Department's position on the priority of the key drivers for the upcoming Columbia River Treaty

negotiations. The Department will actively participate in Columbia River Treaty negotiations/activities through the engagement of Assistant Secretary Petty, and staffed by Reclamation, with the treaty's two technical entities, Bonneville Power Administration and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Department supports the two key drivers being flood control and hydropower generation. (4/2/2018)

The April 2018 24-Month Study establishes that Lake Powell operations will shift to “balancing releases” for the remainder of water year 2018. Under balancing, the contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead will be balanced by the end of the water year, but not more than 9.0 million acre-feet and not less than 8.23 maf shall be released from Lake Powell. Based on the most probable inflow forecast, this April 24-Month Study projects a balancing release of 9.0 maf in water year 2018; the actual release in water year 2018, however, will depend on hydrology in the remainder of water year and will range from 8.23 to 9.0 maf. The projected release from Lake Powell in water year 2018 will be updated each month throughout the remainder of the water year. Based on the current inflow forecast and projected releases, the April 24-Month Study projects Lake Powell elevation will end water year 2018 near 3,598 feet, with approximately 11.6 maf in storage (48 percent of capacity). Currently, Lake Powell is 53 percent full, with a live storage content of 12.8 maf. (4/16/2018)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a press release (3/22/2018) announcing completion of a Species Status Assessment and Five-Year Review, which proposes down-listing the humpback chub from "endangered" to "threatened." The humpback chub is still classified as endangered, and at this time, it is only proposed for down-listing. If the classification of the species is officially changed to threatened, as the Five-Year Review recommends, it will remain fully protected under the Endangered Species Act. The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program have been key contributors to the recovery of this native fish. Reclamation's provision of flows to support native fish and participation in and funding of the conservation and recovery programs is a central reason this species is able to be considered for down-listing. Collaborative partnerships and management of resources have protected the species from extinction. (3/27/2018)

The Department and Reclamation are working with the Council of Environmental Quality on development of a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act for select types of title transfers. In cases where the transfer of title from Reclamation to a willing entity is non-controversial, non-complicated and would not result in a change in the operations or management of the facilities, establishment of a categorical exclusion could decrease the time required for Reclamation to complete title transfers. (3/20/2018)

Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the Federal Register to begin charging fees at Lake Berryessa in Napa County, California. The fees will be used to upgrade facilities and pay for costs associated with recreation. Reclamation will ensure visitors are aware of the proposed plan by holding public scoping meetings, issuing press releases, posting it on the Lake Berryessa website at [www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html), and posting announcements at day-use areas. During public scoping meetings and the public comment period, Reclamation will seek input from the public regarding the possible use of funds collected. Public scoping meetings and public outreach will ensure the public is aware of all proposed fees and passes available to them. (2/26/2018)

Legislation authorizing the Westlands Settlement (“Settlement”) (H.R. 1769) is pending before the House of Representatives. The current stay of the *Firebaugh* injunction expired on January 15, 2018, and the district court did not grant an additional stay. As a result, Reclamation is preparing to expend significant funds to implement the Control Schedule of drainage measures for Westlands as approved by the court and could face additional litigation. The January 2018 Revised Control Schedule identifies a funding need of about \$3 million in FY 2018. Based on Congressional action to date on the fiscal year 2018 budget, upon final passage Reclamation expects to be able to accommodate the \$3 million identified in the Control Schedule. If required, it also identifies a funding need of over \$12.2 million in FY 2019, which is not currently included in the fiscal year 2019 President’s budget; over \$13.8 million in FY 2020, over \$29.7 million in FY 2021—ramping up to a need of over \$101 million in FY 2023. The funding needs to implement drainage are significant and represent a substantial financial obligation for the Department of the Interior. (2/9/2018)

The Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region, Yuma Area Office intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement in early June 2018 to request proposals to fund projects for activities in support of its Endangered Species and Environmental Restoration programs in Federal FY 2018 (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018). The YAO periodically makes funding available for conducting activities for Threatened and Endangered species and their habitats under Section 7(a)1 of the Endangered Species Act under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Program. Reclamation has made \$110,000.00 of funding available for award for this FWCAP Financial Assistance FOA. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that FY 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Reclamation will limit total funding to generally not more than \$50,000 in Federal funding to each applicant. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Eligible applicants are state and local governments, non-profit organizations and institutions, public and private institutions and organizations, federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments, individuals, small businesses, for-profit organizations, and Native American organizations. (4/9/2018)

On April 12, the Glen Canyon Dam Experimental Technical Team met with the Experimental Leadership Team and the Department of the Interior to recommend that Macroinvertebrate Production Flows, also known as “Bug Flows,” be tested between May 1 and August 31, 2018. The Assistant Secretary for Water and Science approved the Bug Flows via a signed memorandum dated April 13, 2018. Bug Flows consist of steady weekend releases from Glen Canyon Dam and normal fluctuating releases during the weekdays. The steady weekend flows are expected to provide favorable conditions for insects to lay eggs along the Colorado River downstream of Glen Canyon Dam, while the fluctuating flows during the weekdays are designed to be slightly higher, thus preventing the eggs from drying out. This experiment is expected to have positive benefits to the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in Glen, Marble, and Grand canyons. The purpose of the experimental flow is to test the effectiveness of Bug Flows on improving insect production and to increase the availability of food for aquatic and terrestrial life. This experiment will be conducted under the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan. On April 30, a press release will be issued. (3/26/2018)

## *U.S. Geological Survey*

[**NEW**] Nearly statewide flooding from snowmelt is wrapping up in Maine as the snowpack is nearly depleted. There is potential for small amounts of additional rain this week, with warming temperatures that may cause the last of the snow to melt and an additional rise. As of April 30, most sites have peaked; there was one 25-50 year peak, five 10-25 year peaks, two 5-10 year peaks, and six 2-5 year peaks. Sites are beginning to recede below NWS minor flood elevations. No gages were damaged. As many as 12 staff of the Maine Office have made over 40 measurements at 28 stations since Thursday of last week. Nine more stations will be measured today and tomorrow, with 2-3 crews of 2 in the field during that time. Interaction with the NWS, cooperating agencies and the public continues. (4/30/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 9, USGS will participate in the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine's Committee on Earth Resources' one-day workshop titled "Critical Minerals and Materials: Opportunities, challenges, and needs for U.S. manufacturing, economy, and security." (5/2/2018)

On May 12, the USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory (Vancouver, Wash.) will hold a one-day public open house. USGS scientists will take a break from their day-to-day work to set up volcano displays and prepare science demonstrations to share with the public. The event is free and all ages are welcome. A local media advisory will be distributed. (3/27/2018)

On May 16 and 17, USGS scientists will meet with the Nez Perce Tribal Council to discuss ongoing research to investigate mercury cycling and bioaccumulation on a section of the Snake River referred to as Hells Canyon. The USGS, in collaboration with Idaho Power Company and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, started the investigation in 2014 to evaluate processes controlling mercury transport, cycling, and bioaccumulation in Hells Canyon. The work is a collaborative effort with scientists from the USGS Wisconsin Water Science Center, USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, USGS Idaho Water Science Center, and the USGS Water Mission Area. (4/25/18)

[**NEW**] In a new USGS Powell Center project, scientists from the USGS, Columbia University, and the EPA will lead an international working group to synthesize information on terrestrial nitrogen fixation worldwide. Biological nitrogen fixation is the largest source of the essential nutrient nitrogen that feeds terrestrial ecosystems worldwide. As a result, biological nitrogen fixation has far reaching effects on ecosystem properties such as water quality and carbon storage, sustainability for plant growth and soil fertility, and the global climate system. However, there is much uncertainty in how local measurements should be upscaled for large-scale assessments and Earth systems modeling. Researchers will synthesize nitrogen fixation data for many different species, including free-living bacteria, symbiotic plants, mosses, lichens, and others. New methods will create maps of nitrogen fixation across the United States and North America, and analyses of environmental drivers will improve future predictions of biological nitrogen fixation in response to regional and global environmental change. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] This spring, USGS scientists will begin collecting bird data on grasslands in Montana. A local news release is planned for the communities of Malta and Glasgow to alert residents in the area that scientists will be conducting field work on public lands. (4/26/2018)

[**NEW**] The Department of Justice has solicited the USGS for Bob Holmes (or someone with equivalent knowledge and experience) to be the expert hydraulics witness in the second phase of the Ideker Farms Missouri River litigation. The work effort would be approximately 6 months of calendar time. It is expected that Bob will be selected, but this is not yet final. Plans are being made to backfill Holmes flood coordination duties. (4/30/2018)

Executive Order 13817/Secretarial Order 3359 milestones: On April 19, 2018, the USGS delivered to the Secretary a draft plan to better assess the Nation's subsurface mineral potential through new collection of geophysical, geologic, and topographic data. Beginning in May, the USGS anticipates additional review and input from other Federal agencies and external partners, and ongoing revisions as required to inform the government-wide strategy to be published by the Department of Commerce in August 2018. Coordination with white house staff continues on next steps following the assessment of the public comments received on the draft critical mineral list. Another Federal Register Notice has been suggested as an option. Next steps in support of the Executive Order include USGS technical input to interagency drafting teams on: (1) the potential to better use above-ground sources of critical minerals through recycling, reprocessing, and substituting alternative materials; (2) existing foreign trade dependencies for critical minerals. (2/9/2018)

In late June, a delegation of 180 officials from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are invited to meet at the University of Oklahoma, the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) host university, during the 2018 Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council Ministerial. The South Central CASC is planning to highlight their science work during the officials' visit and will be part of the University of Oklahoma's discussions for future plans to collaborate with these officials and stakeholders. The CEC Council Chairmanship and Ministerial rotates between the US, Mexico, and Canada each year, and Administrator Scott Pruitt (current chair) selected Oklahoma City as the location for the 2018 meeting. The theme for this year's Council Ministerial is "Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth". (4/24/2018)

[**NEW**] The USGS Energy Resources Program (ERP), through the U.S. Department of the Interior's Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP) and the U.S. State Department, has been invited to participate in a scoping assessment of Romanian oil and gas concessions, data management and environmental risk mitigation. The assessment, which will take place in June, will be led by State's Energy Resources Bureau (ENR) and will include site visits to Bucharest and Constanta. This initial assessment might lead to further energy governance and capacity building in the region later this year. (5/2/2018)

[**NEW**] The USGS continues progress toward implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) for the energy geochemistry laboratories. External audits are complete and USGS is taking corrective actions to address audit results and preparing a formal report to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) that certifies that a functional QMS is fully implemented. The target date to complete the package internally is May 18, after which results will be reviewed

with USGS management and submitted to DOI for further review. Any changes will be reviewed again, with final submission to the OIG scheduled for late June. (5/2/2018)

[**NEW**] This summer, a manuscript on a new USGS assessment of undiscovered conventional oil and gas resources in downip Paleogene formations of the U.S. Gulf Coast will be published in the Gulf Coast Association of Geologic Societies Bulletin. In 2007, based on only sparse data, the USGS estimated with large uncertainty over 50 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered gas. Recent discoveries offshore and data from wells onshore provided new evidence of a working petroleum system in these formations. Subsequently, eight assessment units (AUs) for conventional resources and three AUs for continuous (unconventional) resources were identified. (5/2/2018)

[**NEW**] The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NAS) has nearly completed a strategic review of the USGS Energy Resources Program. The study is to evaluate the long term strategic priorities of the program and suggest alternatives or changes for the program to consider. A committee was assembled by the NAS and has now met three times, twice with program participation and once in closed session. A rough draft of the report is due in early July, with a final report due by August. (5/2/2018)

Beginning August 6, the USGS will conduct the Mid-Atlantic Resource Imaging Experiment (MATRIX) seismic project on Atlantic margin in partnership with BOEM and the U.S. Department of Energy. The goal of the project is to image distribution of gas hydrate and shallow gas on Atlantic margin between Hudson Canyon and Cape Hatteras across areas considered highly prospective for gas hydrates. Seismic data will be collected over a period of 2.5 to 3 weeks. An Incidental Harassment Authorization Application was submitted to NMFS in March, and initial comments have been received. The Draft Environmental Assessment and request for Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act was also submitted to NMFS in March. The draft EA is posted on the USGS Coastal/Marine Hazards & Resources Program's environmental compliance website and is open for public comment until April 19. (4/6/2018)

[**NEW**] Secretarial Order 3352 milestones: The reprocessing of vintage 2-D seismic data acquired in the mid-1980s over the Section 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is progressing, with expected delivery in the summer of 2018. A resource assessment of the Section 1002 area will be deferred pending the acquisition of 3-D seismic data by industry. In the interim, the USGS will shift its efforts on resource assessments on Alaska's North Slope to accelerate the evaluation of the Central North Slope (CNS) lands situated between ANWR and the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The expected completion date of the CNS assessment is December 2019; an assessment covering NPR-A was released in December 2017. Field work to support the broader North Slope effort is scheduled for this summer, with logistical planning now underway. (5/2/2018)

### **Upcoming USGS Publications**

[**NEW**] A paper entitled "The risk of rodent introductions from shipwrecks to seabirds on Aleutian and Bering Sea islands" was recently published online in *Biological Invasions*. The

study details details the likelihood of rodent introductions to islands of Alaska via shipwrecks and the risk to seabird colonies. The analysis is useful to prioritize where resources should best be used to prevent catastrophic decimation of seabirds by rats. Partners include USFWS, NOAA Fisheries, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Tern Again Consulting, Wildlife Conservation Society, Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands LCC. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A new USGS Open-File Report entitled, “Juvenile Lost River and Shortnose Sucker Year Class Strength, Survival, and Growth in Upper Klamath Lake, Oregon, and Clear Lake Reservoir, California—2016 Monitoring Report” was recently published online April 20. The report is part of a long-term monitoring program that monitors juvenile Lost River and shortnose sucker production, growth, and survival in both Upper Klamath Lake and Clear Lake to help inform management and recovery actions conducted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Bureau of Reclamation. Data are anticipated to be useful for identification of environmental variables affecting annual production and survival of young suckers. The monitoring program has helped to describe sucker population dynamics in the two lakes, but the causes of high apparent first year sucker mortality in Upper Klamath Lake remain unknown. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] On May 1 a new USGS summary entitled “2017 Exploration Review in Mining Engineering” was published in the journal *Mining Engineering*. The USGS produces this summary of 2017 international mineral exploration activities which draws upon information from multiple industry and USGS sources and published literature. The data summarizes budget estimates for worldwide exploration activities in 2017 for 30 nonfuel mineral commodities and metal alloys, based on company surveys. Surveys focused on precious metals, base metals, bulk commodities and other commodities. These analyses identify where mineral exploration is occurring by commodity and region, characterize the intensity of activity that is taking place in each region for selected mineral commodities and determine those factors that most affect changes in exploration activity. (5/1/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 14 a new USGS cooperator report entitled “Evaluation of Icebreaker Wind project vendor proposals for radar-based monitoring of flying animals” will be available online from the USGS Publications Warehouse. The Icebreaker Wind Project is a pilot six turbine offshore wind energy development proposed for western Lake Erie. As part of the environmental regulatory process, project developers must gather radar data on use of project airspace by flying animals during pre- and post-construction. Three vendors responded to the developer’s request for information to conduct that work. At the request of the developer, the Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation, and Region 3 US FWS, Ecosystem Services, USGS was asked to provide a scientific assessment as to which vendor’s technology was most likely to successfully gather data on the development’s airspace use by birds and bats. The USGS was approached for this assessment because the agency is home to a leading authority on the use of radar to track flying animals. The report may have influence beyond this development, since it addresses technical and environmental concerns that bird monitoring associated with other proposed offshore developments will likely encounter. (5/1/2018)

[**NEW**] A new paper entitled, “The complete mitochondrial genome of Hine’s emerald dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana* Williamson) via NGS sequencing” was accepted in an upcoming volume of *Mitochondrial DNA Part B*. The Hine’s emerald dragonfly (HED) was listed as endangered by



the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1995 and currently occurs in Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, and Ontario, Canada. This information could be used to develop species-specific molecular assays for surveying potential HED habitat by eDNA sampling, thus providing another tool for resource managers. (05/02/18)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “The Role of Environmental Driving Factors in Historical and Projected Carbon Dynamics of Wetland Ecosystems in Alaska” was accepted for publication in *Ecological Applications*. The paper characterizes research that conducted to assess carbon dynamics and the relative influence of changing environmental driving factors on carbon balance in wetland ecosystems of Alaska. Among its findings, the study estimates that wetland ecosystems of Alaska lost carbon during the historical period (1950-2009), but that wetland ecosystems will sequester carbon during the remainder of this century (2010-2099). (4/30/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Past and future global transformation of terrestrial ecosystems under climate change” was accepted for publication in *Science*. The paper uses the ecosystem transitions between the last glacial period and the present as a metric to determine sensitivity of global ecosystems to future climate change. A key finding in the paper is that under business-as-usual greenhouse gas emission scenarios, most terrestrial ecosystems worldwide are at risk of major transformation in the next century. (4/30/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Quantifying climate-related interactions in shallow and deep storage and Evapotranspiration in a forested, seasonally water-limited watershed in the Southeastern United States” was accepted for publication in *Water Resources Research*. The paper quantifies water budgets for the Panola Mountain Research Watershed for a 30-year period that included five long-term droughts and delivers information that can be used by water managers to meet current and future water needs while addressing the impacts of climate patterns and change on water availability. Anticipated online publication is in May 2018 (5/1/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Assessing Historical and Projected Carbon Balance of Alaska: A Synthesis of Results and Policy/Management Implications” was accepted for publication in *Ecological Applications*. The paper characterizes research conducted to assess carbon dynamics and the relative influence of changing environmental driving factors on carbon balance in wetland ecosystems of Alaska. (5/1/2018)

[*NEW*] A new paper entitled, “Heightened Immune System Function in Polar Bears Using Terrestrial Habitats?” was accepted for publication in *Physiological and Biochemical Zoology*. The study tested whether southern Beaufort Sea polar bears on shore, during summer, exhibited greater immune system activity than bears remaining on sea ice. Polar bears of the southern Beaufort Sea (SBS) subpopulation are spending increasing periods on land during the summer, potentially exposing them to pathogens that are largely absent to sea ice-summering bears. Data suggest that polar bears in the SBS experience greater infections in terrestrial habitat than on the sea ice. As more bears spend longer periods on shore, this trend has the potential to increase disease risk in the SBS as well as other subpopulations. This work was supported by USGS, University of Wyoming, University of Washington, and Polar Bears International. Analyses were conducted and data were produced by University of Wyoming. The data in the paper are publicly archived by the National Center for Atmospheric Research as required by NSF. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A paper entitled “Variation in inbreeding rates across the range of Northern Spotted Owls (*Strix occidentalis caurina*): insights from over 30 years of monitoring data” was accepted for publication in *The Auk: Ornithological Advances*. USGS and partners developed a framework to infer inbreeding rates of Northern Spotted Owls when incomplete parentage information exists. They used over 30 years of monitoring data from 14187 Northern Spotted Owls to estimate inbreeding rates and identify common forms of inbreeding. They also show that there is strong natural selection against inbred Northern Spotted Owls. Authors comment on the primary threats to Northern Spotted Owls and discuss how inbreeding could further affect specific populations in Washington, Oregon, and California and discuss situations where translocations may benefit specific populations of Northern Spotted Owls that are experiencing relatively high rates of inbreeding. Partners include USFS, Oregon Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Green Diamond Resource Company, USDA-APHIS, National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, NPS, Hoopa Valley Tribal Forestry, Raedeke Associates; Funding provided by Sierra Pacific Industries, Inc., the USDI USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, the USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Weyerhaeuser Company, Hancock Forest Management, and USDI National Park Service. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A paper entitled “Geographic variation in natal dispersal of Northern Spotted Owls over 28 years” was accepted for publication in *The Condor*. USGS and U.S. Forest Service researchers analyzed northern spotted owl dispersal distance from natal site to first breeding site, during 1985–2012 in Oregon and Washington to examine how barred owls affect northern spotted owls’ movement. Their objectives were to: (1) determine net natal dispersal distances relative to geographic region and time; (2) determine directional movements of natal dispersal relative to geographic region, year, and sex; (3) describe patterns of natal dispersal relative to barred owl presence; (4) evaluate variation in age at first breeding relative to geographic region and dispersal distance; and (5) examine patterns of long-distance natal dispersal. Their findings could provide insight into understanding the relationships between barred owls, habitat loss or fragmentation, and the role of long-distance dispersal of northern spotted owls. Partners include USDA Forest Service; Collaborators – USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Weyerhaeuser Company, Hancock Forest Management, and USDI National Park Service; Funding – Sierra Pacific Industries, Inc. (05/02/18)

[**NEW**] A paper entitled, “Trout in hot water: a call for global action” is pending publication in *Science (Letters)*. USGS and partners with Trout Unlimited and the Illinois Natural History Survey describe the global conservation status of freshwater trout and char species as of 2018. Approximately 75% of trout species that have been assessed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature are now threatened with global extinction due to numerous human activities. However, 48% of extant species have not been assessed or lack sufficient data to determine their global conservation status. Reversing these declines will require better understanding current taxonomic diversity and implementing progressive conservation efforts to protect native trout diversity and ameliorate ongoing and future threats at local and global scales. (05/02/18)

[NEW] A paper entitled, “Rapid Departure of Roseate Terns (*Sterna dougallii*) following large-scale nest failure” was accepted in *Wilson Journal of Ornithology*. Large-scale nest failure by endangered Roseate Terns in two years at a colony site on the Falkner Island, CT unit of the USFWS’s McKinney National Wildlife Refuge was followed by the departure of about 75% of those individuals within two days of failure. Terns that left this site before the end of June had sufficient time to renest at another colony site in the same year, or they may have moved and spent time nearby areas that now have operational or permitted offshore wind energy facilities. Terns that were able to renest successfully at another colony site could have shown reduced fidelity to the Falkner Island site in subsequent years, and this may have impacted the overall metapopulation dynamics of the regional breeding population. (05/02/18)

[NEW] This summer a new USGS article entitled “Hunting for the legacy of landslides from Cascadia's great earthquakes” will be published in the journal *Eos*. The article describes the USGS-hosted, multi-agency Cascadia Earthquake Landslides Working Group and related research efforts to understand the landslide hazards resulting from magnitude-9 earthquakes in subduction zones. The prospect of a great earthquake along Cascadia and its effect on the terrestrial landscape has recently garnered substantial scientific and societal interest. The linkages between subduction zone earthquakes and landslide hazards, however, remain great unknowns. Aligning research interests between the USGS Cascadia Recurrence project, academic groups, and state agencies prompted the formation of the Cascadia Earthquake Landslides Working Group, which held a workshop in 2017 to coordinate research efforts related to coseismic landslides in Cascadia. This new article is a culmination of the Working Group's efforts in laying a methodological groundwork to use the archive of landslides preserved in the landscape as a gauge for strong ground motion of past great earthquakes. Partners include the University of Oregon, University of Texas, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Washington Geological Survey and the University of Washington. (5/2/2018)

[NEW] In May a new USGS paper entitled “Remote Sensing Analysis of Vegetation at the San Carlos Apache Reservation, AZ and Surrounding Area” will be published in the *Journal of Applied Remote Sensing*. Land managers of the San Carlos Apache Tribe identified a need to obtain an updated vegetation map for better management of forest, woodland and rangelands. Various remote sensing techniques were applied to classify multi-temporal Landsat 8 satellite data, vegetation index, and digital elevation model data. A multi-tiered unsupervised classification generated over 900 classes that were then recoded to one of 16 generalized vegetation/land cover classes using the Southwest Regional Gap Analysis Project (SWReGAP) map as a guide. A supervised classification was also run using field data collected in the SWReGAP project and our field campaign. Field data was gathered and accuracy assessments were generated to compare outputs. Our hypothesis was that a resulting map would update and potentially improve upon the vegetation/land cover class distributions of the older SWReGAP map over the 24,000 km<sup>2</sup> study area. The estimated overall accuracies ranged between 43 - 75%, depending on which method and field dataset was used. The findings demonstrate the complexity of vegetation mapping, the importance of recent, high-quality-field data, and the potential for misleading results when insufficient field data is collected. (5/2/2018)

[NEW] In June/July a new USGS paper entitled “Heightened Immune System Function in Polar Bears Using Terrestrial Habitats” will be published in the journal *Physiological and Biochemical*

*Zoology*. Polar bears of the southern Beaufort Sea (SBS) subpopulation are spending increasing periods on land during the summer, potentially exposing them to pathogens that are largely absent to sea ice-summering bears. Until recently, only about 5% of SBS individuals used shore habitats in summer. However, as a result of rapidly-declining summer ice extent, this proportion has grown to about 30% and the time these polar bears spend on land has become prolonged. Data suggest that polar bears in the SBS experience greater infections in terrestrial habitat than on the sea ice. As more bears spend longer periods on shore, this trend has the potential to increase disease risk in the SBS as well as other subpopulations. This work was also supported by the University of Wyoming, University of Washington, and Polar Bears International. Analyses were conducted and data were produced by University of Wyoming. The data in the paper are publicly archived by the National Center for Atmospheric Research as required by NSF. (5/2/2018)

[*NEW*] In May a new USGS paper entitled “Associations between Urban Sprawl and Life Expectancy in the United States” will be published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. One of the most rapid and continuing changes in land cover is urbanization. It has been shown that the form of urbanization, especially the degree of sprawl, has many adverse consequences. Recent correlational studies have shown reduced human life expectancy in more highly sprawling urban areas. This study evaluates several potential pathways whereby sprawl might reduce longevity, including reduced air quality, increased miles driven, increased obesity, and increased crime rates. After controlling for sociodemographic characteristics, this study found that life expectancy was significantly higher in compact counties than in sprawling counties. Results may help our ability to use compact urban design principles to enhance life spans. Partners include the University of Texas at Arlington, Utah State University, and the National Cancer Institute. (5/2/2018)

[*NEW*] A paper entitled, “Assessment of two external transmitter attachments for *Boiga irregularis* (Brown Treesnakes)” will be published in *Herpetological Review*. The goal of the investigation was to identify the least intrusive method of monitoring arboreal, tropical snakes for studies lasting no more than a month. To do this the scientists tested two methods of attaching temporary radio transmitters to the tails of brown treesnakes using glue and tape. The method that resulted in zero abrasion-related injuries to the snakes was concluded to be the more viable and non-intrusive method for attaching short-term radio transmitters to arboreal, tropical snakes. (5/2/2018)

# Conversation Contents

## Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/30

### Attachments:

/63. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/30/1.1 Speaking Calendar.xlsx  
/63. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/30/1.2 Speaking Engagement Form.docx

**"Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed May 02 2018 17:10:30 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** "Newell, Russell" <russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/30  
**Attachments:** Speaking Calendar.xlsx Speaking Engagement Form.docx

Team,

Attached, please find the latest version of the speaking calendar, updated for the week of 4/30.

The Speaking Engagement Form is attached on here as well; if an upcoming speaking engagement of yours is not on the calendar, please have an assistant in your hallway fill out the form and send it to Russ Newell and me, with Laura Rigas CC'd.

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Sincerely,

Eli Nachmany  
Speechwriter, Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 706-9285

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)
4/30	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Offshore Technology Conference	
4/30	Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Technology Conference	
4/30	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes	
4/30	Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session	
5/1	Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session	
5/2	Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session	
5/3	Susan Combs	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Reorganization Listening Session	
5/3	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Offshore Technology Conference	
5/3	Rick May	Senior National Adviser for Recreation	Office of the Secretary	RV Power Breakfast	
5/11	Cally Younger	Acting Deputy Solicitor for Land Resources	Office of the Solicitor	National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference	
5/16	Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	15th Annual Stewardship Partnership Meeting - Southern Company and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	

Location	OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Houston, TX		Open	Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector	
Houston, TX		Open	Industry, trade associations, government, academia	
Artesia, NM		?	Law enforcement officers, tribal members	
Lakewood, CO		Closed	Denver-based DOI SES employees	
Albuquerque, NM		Closed	Stakeholders/AG	
Grand Junction, CO		?	CLUB 20	
Cheyenne, WY		Closed	Cheyenne-area DOI employees	
Houston, TX		Open	Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector	
Elkhart, IN		Open	RV enthusiasts, outdoor industry	
Louisville, KY		Open	Ecosystem banking and related markets	
Biloxi, MS		Closed		

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)	Location
10/16	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	American Recreation Coalition luncheon	Outdoor recreation	Washington, D.C.
10/16	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	National Congress of American Indians	Upholding trust	Milwaukee, WI
10/17	Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of Intergovernment and External Affairs	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	responsibilities	
10/17	Casey Hammond	DAS	Land and Minerals Management	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Secretary's Top 10 priorities	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Aurelia Skipwith	DAS	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Bureau of Land Management issues	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Mining Association	Conservation	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Austin Ewell	DAS	Water and Science	Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway completion ceremony	Secretary's priorities for hardrock mining and coal	Washington, D.C.
10/19	David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	National Congress of American Indians		Folsom, CA
10/19	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council	Sovereignty	Milwaukee, WI
10/20	Daniel Jorjani	Principal Deputy Solicitor	Office of the Solicitor	CA State Bar Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite	Upholding trust responsibilities	Polson, MT
10/21	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Alaska Federation Natives & Consultation	Regulatory reform	Fish Camp, CA
10/24	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exhibition Keynote Luncheon	Upholding trust responsibilities and Licensed Indian Traders regulations consultation	Anchorage, AK
10/24	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	NM Assn of Conservation Districts	Secure and reliable energy production from the Outer Continental Shelf	Lafayette, LA
10/26	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	DOI-Self Governance Advisory Quarterly Meeting	Public access, forest management, sage grouse	Taos, NM
10/27	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Chemical Association	Reorganization	Washington, D.C.
10/31	Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	ACT-IAC 2017 Executive Leadership Conference	Energy dominance	New Orleans, LA
11/1	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Native American Heritage Month Opening Ceremony	Management efficiency and effectiveness	Williamsburg, VA
						Washington, D.C.



11/1 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Organization of American States 2017		
11/2 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Conservation Champion Award	Award presentation	Washington, D.C.
11/3 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Women in Energy Infrastructure		Washington, D.C.
11/7 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference - DC	Land into trust, tribal courts	Washington, D.C.
11/8 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	NACA 2017-Federal Contracting Policy & Advocacy Conference	Economic development for Native communities	Washington, D.C.
11/8 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Deepwater Operations Conference		Galveston, TX
11/8 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Tribal/Interior Budget Council		Washington, D.C.
11/9 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Alaska Miners Association Convention	Federal policy regarding hard rock resources on federal land	Anchorage, AK
11/9 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Easton Waterfowl Festival Premiere Night	Introducing winner of the duck stamp competition	Easton, MD
11/9 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Heartland Institute America First Energy Conference	American Energy Dominance	Houston, TX
11/14 Andrea Travnicek	Acting Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	International Assn. of Drilling Contractors		Austin, TX
11/14 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	20th William T. Pecora Memorial Remote Sensing Symposium	Application of Earth Observing Data	Sioux Falls, SD
11/14 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Idaho Cattle Association		Sun Valley, ID
11/16 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Luncheon	Western issues	Washington, DC
11/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club Presentation		Grand Junction, CO
11/17 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	"Mvskoke Etlwv: The Muscogee People"	Meet and greet	Washington, DC
11/21 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	TBD: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Gas Infrastructure Exports Initiative	U.S. LNG	Washington, DC
11/28 Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	Commonwealth North Board of Directors meeting	DOI in Alaska	Anchorage, AK
11/28 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting	Invasive species management	Las Vegas, NV
11/29 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs Alaska Providers Conference		Anchorage, AK
11/30 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference		Hood River, OR
			Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls		Ottawa, Canada

11/30 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Environmental Law & Policy Conference	Endangered Species Act	Washington, DC
11/30 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
11/30 Austin Ewell	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
12/4 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Reducing barriers to mineral exploration and development	Sparks/Reno, NV
12/5 John Tahsuda	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	National Indian Gaming Association	Indian trader regulations and proposed land acquisition regulations	Washington, DC
12/6 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Offshore Operators Committee General Mtg		New Orleans, LA
12/6 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Platts Energy Conference		New York, NY
12/6 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Sage-grouse, regulatory reform	Reno, NV
12/6 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Civil Applications Committee, NCAC Reston	Volcanoes and landslide analysis	Reston, VA
12/7 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	State Policy Network		Washington, DC
12/7 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	ALEC: States & Nations Policy Summit	Energy dominance	Nashville, TN
12/7 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	American Exploration and Mining Association	Alaska's mining industry	Reno, NV
12/8 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/8 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/11 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Bayou Industrial Group and South Central Industrial Association	Offshore energy	Gray, LA
12/12 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular Affairs	Island Government Finance Officers (IGFOA) Conference		Maui, HI

12/15 Brenda Burman	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Colorado River Water Users Association Annual Conference		Las Vegas, NV
1/5 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Congressional Sports Foundation		Dallas, TX
1/6 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Dallas Safari Club		Dallas, TX
			Heritage Foundation Overcriminalization Working Group	MBTA M-Opinion	Washington, DC
1/10 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Solicitor	Archery Trade Association		Indianapolis, IN
1/11 Rick May	Senior National Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Sacramento, CA
1/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			
1/17 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Mid Pacific Region Water Users Conference	CA water issues	Reno, NV
1/17 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Federalist Society	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Washington, DC
1/18 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Prior Lake, MN
1/19 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Wild Sheep Foundation Convention		Reno, NV
			Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Panel		
1/19 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Texas Oil and Gas Assn. Legislative and Regulatory Planning Meeting	Federal regulation of oil and gas	Anchorage, AK
1/23 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement			New Orleans, LA
	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary				
1/24 Jason Larrabee		Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Ecological Restoration Business Association Meet and Greet with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	Infrastructure	Washington, DC
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Portland, OR
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention		Portland, OR
1/26 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation			Denver, CO
				Sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros	
1/29 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Society for Range Management		Sparks, NV
				Secretary's position on tribal relations	
1/31 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	DOI Alaska Native relations training		Anchorage, AK
2/1 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	2018 Power and Energy Ski Conference		Deer Valley, UT
			Federal Delegation Meeting - House Committee on Natural Resources		
2/2 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Close Up Foundation (USET)	Panel with students	Salt Lake City, UT
2/5 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)		Washington, DC
2/6 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			Washington, DC
				Streamline and improve the listing and ruling process of at-risk species	
2/6 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	Fish and Wildlife Service	Forest Landowners Association Board of Directors Meeting		Washington, DC

2/8 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Indian Gaming Conference	Fee-to-trust under the Trump administration Interior priorities and accomplishments	Valley Center, CA
2/8 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Texas Public Policy Foundation Western Caucus Foundation House Staff Policy		Austin, TX
2/9 Todd Willens 2/12 John Tahsuda	Assistant Deputy Secretary Acting Asst. Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary Indian Affairs	Planning Retreat State of Indian Nations		Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 Dan Smith	Acting Director	National Park Service	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Brian Steed	Deputy Director	Bureau of Land Management	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Cally Younger 2/13 John Tahsuda	Counselor Acting Asst. Secretary	Bureau of Land Management Indian Affairs	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails National Congress of American Indians 23rd Annual National Indian Women's	Protect the Great Lakes and Relationship to DOI Departmental Budget	Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	"Supporting Each Other Honoring Lunch"		Washington, DC
2/14 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Great Lakes Environmental Summit		Washington, DC
2/17 Aurelia Skipwith 2/19 Steve Wackowski	Deputy Asst. Secretary Senior Advisor for Alaska Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Office of the Secretary	Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Birthday Celebration Meet Alaska Conference and Tradeshow		Washington, DC Anchorage, AK
2/20 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Native American Child Safety Act (NACSA)		Phoenix, AZ
2/21 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Guidelines		Albuquerque, NM
2/22 Jason Funes	Special Assistant Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary		FreedomWorks		Oxon Hill, MD
2/22 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and		Miami, FL
2/22 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Conference	Western water issues	Reno, NV

2/22 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	South Dakota Chamber of Commerce	Tourism through National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges	Pierre, SD
2/22 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Insular and International Affairs	Coral Reef Task Force		Washington, DC
2/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/1 Steve Wackowski	Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference		Anchorage, AK
3/1 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Indian Trust Asset Reform Act		Portland, OR
3/1 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/5 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement		Regulators roundtable: Oil and gas industry governance	
3/5 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	CERAWeek		Houston, TX
3/6 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	National Ground Water Association, Irrigation Association & Water Quality Association		Washington, DC
3/7 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	American Sheep Industry Association			Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Policy, Management & Budget	CXO Fellows Event (Chief Financial Officers Council)		Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Coal Council	What's next for Interior	Clearwater Beach, FL
3/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Caucus Foundation		
3/9 Ryan Nichols	Advisor	Water and Science		Proctor Creek Urban Waters projects in the Atlanta area	Tempe, AZ
3/14 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Proctor Creek Celebration of Success		Atlanta, GA
3/15 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	Faegre Baker Daniels Energy & Environment Symposium		Washington, DC
3/15 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Interstate Council on Water Policy		Arlington, VA
3/15 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs		Cross Boundary Implications for Pre-Border Prevention and Post-Border Mitigation of Invasive Species	
3/18 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Governors Association Western Working Lands		Denver, CO
3/26 Rick May	Senior National Adviser for Recreation	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
			World Water Forum Brasilia		Brazil
			American Sportfishing Association	Recreation and fishing	Crystal City, VA

3/28 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Scotia Howard Weil 47th Annual Energy Conference		New Orleans, LA
3/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	North American Wildlife and Resources Conference	Initiatives with invasive species	Norfolk, VA
3/28 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Quarterly Self-Governance Consultation, Sharee Freeman		Washington, DC
3/29 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference		Norfolk, VA
4/3 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Wind Finance Meeting		New York, NY
4/4 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum		Princeton, NJ
4/4 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Bakken Federal Executives Group	DOI energy policy Promotion of sport fishing and boating to increase participation	N/A (Conference Call)
4/5 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council		Washington, DC
4/5 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Center for Growth and Opportunity		Las Vegas, NV
4/6 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association's 43rd Annual Indian Law Conference	Public land management Indian Child Welfare Act Panel	Scottsdale, AZ
4/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	National Water Resources Association		Washington, DC
4/9 TBD	TBD	TBD	National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Legislative Summit		Washington, DC
4/10 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	"Tuesday Morning Group" - Virginia Institute for Public Policy	Interior energy portfolio Federal Offshore Oil & Gas Leasing & Development	Richmond, VA
4/10 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation		New Orleans, LA
4/10 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management		Sheperdstown, WV
4/12 Alan Mikkelsen	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Reclamation	Klamath Water Users Association Annual Meeting		Klamath Falls, OR
4/12 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
4/13 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Kate MacGregor	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)		Washington, DC

4/16 Ben Cassidy	Senior Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Council of Snowmobile Associations	Motorized access Administration's energy policy strategy	Washington, DC
4/16 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Northern California Power Agency Conference		Washington, DC
4/17 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Flag Day		American Samoa
4/17 Gray Payne	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	National Association of Clean Water Agencies	Infrastructure	Washington, DC
4/17 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Board of Directors		Phoenix, AZ
			BLM National Project Support Team Meeting		
4/18 Austin Ewell	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	HayWired Rollout		Berkeley, CA
4/18 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	National Indian Gaming Association Annual Membership Meeting		Las Vegas, NV
4/19 Tucker Davis	Advisor	Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement	Virginia Coal and Energy Alliance's Annual Arbor Day Celebration		Vansant, VA
4/24 Susan Combs	Acting Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Texas Association of Business	Reorganization	Washington, DC
4/24 Susan Combs	Acting Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Texas Farm Bureau		Washington, DC
4/25 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Flag Day		American Samoa
4/25 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	2018 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference		Albuquerque, NM
4/26 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Coalition of Large Tribes		Albuquerque, NM
4/27 Kathleen Benedetto	Senior Adviser	Bureau of Land Management	Good Samaritan Protection to Enhance Abandoned Mine Land Cleanup		Golden, CO (Colorado School of Mines)

OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Yes - drafted	?		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed	Members of the Nat'l Mining Association	
	Open		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
Yes - drafted	Open	MT tribal leaders	Sonja Twoleggins (406) 252-2550
	?	Environmental lawyers	
	Open	AK tribal leaders	Alaska Federation Nation (907) 274-3611
Yes - drafted	Open	Oil and gas industry	
	?		
	?	Tribal	
	Closed	Chemical plant managers from LA Federal and state government/private government contractors	
	Open		
	?		



	Open ?	Energy industry, state and federal	
	?		
	?		
	Open		
	?		
Yes	Open unless objections	Mining industry	
	Open	Local residents	
Yes	?		
	Closed		
	Open ?	Scientists, engineers, students Idaho ranchers	
Yes - drafted	Closed	Congressional members	
	Open ?	Oil and gas industry	
TBD Yes	TBD	TBD	
	Closed	Board of Directors, staff Federal and state government	
	Open	rangeland weeds experts	Slade Franklin, (307) 777-6585
	?		
	Open	OR water users	
	Closed	Representatives of Mexico, Canada, and US governments	

Reviewed	Closed		
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	?	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?	Various tribal leaders	
	Closed	Offshore industry and oil and gas	
	?	Energy industry, federal and state officials.	
	Open		
	Closed		
	Closed	Leaders of the State Policy Network	
	Closed	State representatives and stakeholders	
	Open	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?		
	?		
	Open	Members of the oil and gas community, local business leaders	
	Closed		

	Open	Colorado River water users
Yes	?	CSF/DSC members
Yes	?	DSC members
	Closed	
Yes	Open	Retailers
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	Northern and Central CA water issues
	?	Law students and Fed Soc members
	?	Tribal leaders
	?	
	Closed	
	One trade publication	Agency officials, mitigation bankers, investors, Congressional members/staff
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	
	Closed	
	Closed	USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USGS, and BSEE
	Open (limited)	
	Open (local)	Tribal
	?	Tribal
	Closed	FLA Board of Directors

	?	Tribal
Yes	?	
Yes	Closed ?	House Western Caucus Staff Tribal
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	? Open	Interior and Agriculture employees Tribal leaders
	?  Open	Tribal Federal officials, environmental NGOs, local governments, business groups Local community members, elected officials, others interested in the legacy of Frederick Douglass
	Open Open	Industry
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal
Yes	Closed	FreedomWorks volunteers
	?	Tribal
	Open	Western water users

Yes	Closed	
	?	Members of the Coral Reef Task Force
	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
	Open	Officials from the region
	?	Tribal leaders
Yes	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
		International group of senior level energy industry executives and government regulators
	Closed	
	Closed	
	Closed	
Yes	Closed	CXO Fellows
	?	Industry
	?	Western Caucus Foundation members
	?	
	?	
Yes	Closed	Agency officials
	Open	Policy experts, managers
	?	Tribal leaders
Yes	Open	Forum attendees
		Retailers/manufacturers in the fishing industry
	?	

Closed	
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
?	Tribal
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
Open	Offshore wind industry
Open	Industry, trade associations
?	
Closed	Council members
Closed	Academics and students
?	FedBar Organizations, Law
Open	Students
	NWRA members and water users
?	2,000 members of the organization
Closed	Statewide public policy groups and stakeholders
Closed	Lawyers, landmen, regulators
Open	Conservation agency officials from U.S., Mexico, and Canada
Open	Irrigated agriculture
?	Tribal
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	

	Closed	Snowmobile Assn. members
Yes	Closed ?	Public power officials ?
	Closed ?	NACWA Board of Directors Team members
	Open	General public, state and local partners, other stakeholders
	?	Tribal
	Open	300 sixth grade students, federal and state agencies
Yes	?	Business, association, and civic leaders
	Closed ?	30 Texas Farm Bureau leaders
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal
	?	Federal agencies, Congressional, state agencies, industry

# Conversation Contents

## Politicals Meeting

### Attachments:

/64. Politicals Meeting/1.1 Topics.docx

/64. Politicals Meeting/2.1 PolMtgTopics\_01May2018.docx

---

**"Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 01 2018 07:30:18 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Politicals Meeting  
**Attachments:** Topics.docx

Good morning Susan,

When Jason was out, he asked me to give the update in the politicals meeting. I'm prepared to give the update, if you like. Attached is a list of items, I would mention and the bureaus will also provide a few items. Is there anything you want me to add?

Just let me know. Thank you.

**Aurelia Skipwith**

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Room 3148  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 208-5837

**NOTE:**

*Every email I send or receive is subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act.*

---

**"Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 01 2018 09:36:06 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Politicals Meeting  
**Attachments:** PolMtgTopics\_01May2018.docx

Good morning, Susan,

I sent the wrong document this morning. Please see the correct document and it's updated with bureau's comments. Thank you.

**Aurelia Skipwith**



Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Room 3148  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 208-5837

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On Tue, May 1, 2018 at 9:30 AM, Skipwith, Aurelia <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

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1849 C Street, NW, Room 3148  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 208-5837

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---

**Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>**

**From:** Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tue May 01 2018 13:52:41 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Politicals Meeting

Looks ok

Sent from my iPhone

On May 1, 2018, at 9:36 AM, Skipwith, Aurelia <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

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<PolMtgTopics\_01May2018.docx>

## Topics

- Susan Combs on travel out West hosting listening session with public, local officials, and DOI employees regarding proposed Region 8 of the Reorganization – CO, WY, NM
- Next week meetings to find ways to continue increase recreation in NPS and FWS.

### Fish & Wildlife Service

- FWS has determined that the final rule for delisting the GYE DPS grizzly bear does not require modification. FWS affirms the decision that the population of grizzly bears is recovered and should be delisted under the Endangered Species Act.
  - o In Dec 2017, FWS requested public comment on any potential effects from the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling Great Lakes Wolves on the final rule delisting the GYE DPS. The review of comments is complete, and
- Several ESA listings, delisting, and reclassifications:.
  - o Downlistings (Endangered to threatened): Tobusch fishhook cactus, hedgehog cactus, American burying beetle,
  - o Delists: bluecurls, butterfly plant
  - o Listings: macaw, 5 tarantula species
- Three ESA rules are currently undergoing interagency review though OMB-OIRA.
  - o End of the month, FWS and NMFS plan to send to the FR *Federal Register* a proposal to revise regulations pertaining to
    - Interagency cooperation pursuant to section 7
    - Listing of species and designation of critical habitat pursuant to section 4
    - Propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NMFS' current practice.
  - o Planned outreach

### National Park Service

- Next week, public review and comment period will end for the Glacier National Park *Sperry Chalet* EA. Public meetings have already been held. The EA will identify the NPS' preferred alternative, which is to use existing remnant walls to rebuild the structure.
- Next week, NPS SRS Team will host several public meetings throughout Mississippi looking at significant civil rights sites in Mississippi, including the Medgar Evers home and potential designation of ME as national monument. AS to travel to MS for public hearing and speak with Tougaloo College, owner of the home.

## Political Meeting Topics

### ASFWP

- **Susan Combs on travel out West hosting listening session** with public, local officials, and DOI employees regarding **proposed Region 8** of the Reorganization – CO, WY, NM
- Next week meetings to find ways to continue **increase recreation in NPS and FWS**.

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    - Propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NMFS' current practice.
  - o Planned outreach
- **Sand Lake NWR responded to a large waterfowl die-off** approximately six miles northeast of Ipswich, South Dakota. Between **2,000 and 3,000 waterfowl carcasses and sick or injured birds** were discovered over an estimated four-square mile area: snow geese, Canada geese and ducks. The **cause of the die-off is unknown**
- **Internal guidance memo and flow chart issued to clarify when landowners should consider applying for a Section 10 permit.** This is an effort to help Ecological Services field offices provide clear, consistent, and accurate advice to landowners.

### National Park Service

- Next week, public review and **comment period will end for the Glacier National Park Sperry Chalet EA**. Public meetings have already been held. The EA will identify the NPS' preferred alternative, which is to use existing remnant walls to rebuild the structure.
- Next week, NPS SRS Team will host several public meetings throughout Mississippi looking at significant civil rights sites in Mississippi, including the **Medgar Evers home and potential designation of ME Home as national monument**. AS to travel to MS for public hearing and speak with Tougaloo College, owner of the home.
- A couple of transportation related projects: plans and EIS released
  - o **Acadia National Park** has released its **draft transportation plan and EIS** to determine how best to provide safe and efficient transportation

- **Yosemite National Park** will complete a pilot a traffic management program aimed at increasing safety and minimizing long lines at the Arch Rock Entrance Station on California Route 140. This is **one of the pilot programs** the park is implementing to address traffic congestion

# Conversation Contents

## Weekly Report to the Secretary, April 29-May 5

### Attachments:

/65. Weekly Report to the Secretary, April 29-May 5/1.1 Weekly Report to the Secretary April 29-May 5.docx

**"Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Thu Apr 26 2018 16:37:45 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
Alan Mikkelsen <amikkelsen@usbr.gov>, Alex Sterhan <asterhan@usbr.gov>, Andrea Travnicek <andrea\_travnicek@ios.doi.gov>, "Appel, Elizabeth" <elizabeth.appel@bia.gov>, Aurelia Skipwith <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>, Benjamin Cassidy <benjamin\_cassidy@ios.doi.gov>, Billy Dove <william\_dove@ios.doi.gov>, Brenda Burman <bburman@usbr.gov>, Cally Younger <cally.younger@sol.doi.gov>, Casey Hammond <casey\_hammond@ios.doi.gov>, Casey Stemler <casey\_stemler@fws.gov>, Catherine Gulac <catherine\_gulac@ios.doi.gov>, Christina Summers <christina\_summers@ibc.doi.gov>, Daniel Jorjani <daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov>, David Bernhardt <(b) (6)>, Debrah McBride <debrah.mcbride@bia.gov>, Doug Domenech <doug\_domenech@ios.doi.gov>, Downey Magallanes <downey\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov>, Edward Keable <edward.keable@sol.doi.gov>, Elinor Werner <elinor\_werner@ios.doi.gov>, Evan Wilson <evan\_wilson@ios.doi.gov>, Gareth Rees <gareth\_rees@ios.doi.gov>, Gary Lawkowski <gary\_lawkowski@ios.doi.gov>, Heather Swift <heather\_swift@ios.doi.gov>, James Voyles <james\_voyles@ios.doi.gov>, Jim Cason <james\_cason@ios.doi.gov>, Joe Balash <joseph\_balash@ios.doi.gov>, John Bockmier <john\_bockmier@ios.doi.gov>, John Tahsuda <john.tahsuda@bia.gov>, Juliette Lillie <juliette\_lillie@ios.doi.gov>, Kate MacGregor <kate\_macgregor@ios.doi.gov>, Kathleen Benedetto <kbenedetto@blm.gov>, Katie Mills <katie\_mills@ios.doi.gov>, Kerry Rae <kerry\_rae@ios.doi.gov>, Laura Rigas <Laura\_Rigas@ios.doi.gov>, Lori Mashburn <lori\_mashburn@ios.doi.gov>, Mariagrazia Caminiti

**To:**

<marigrace.caminiti@sol.doi.gov>, Matthew Dermody  
<matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>, Maureen Foster  
<maureen\_foster@ios.doi.gov>, Micah Chambers  
<micah\_chambers@ios.doi.gov>, Nikolao Pula  
<nikolao\_pula@ios.doi.gov>, Russell Newell  
<russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>, Scott Cameron  
<scott\_cameron@ios.doi.gov>, Scott Hommel  
<scott\_hommel@ios.doi.gov>, Susan Combs  
<susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>, Tim Petty  
<timothy\_petty@ios.doi.gov>, Tim Williams  
<timothy\_williams@ios.doi.gov>, Todd Willens  
<todd\_willens@ios.doi.gov>, Todd Wynn  
<todd\_wynn@ios.doi.gov>, Vincent DeVito  
<Vincent\_DeVito@ios.doi.gov>, Zack Gambill  
<zack\_gambill@fws.gov>

**Subject:**

Weekly Report to the Secretary, April 29-May 5

**Attachments:**

Weekly Report to the Secretary April 29-May 5.docx

All,

Attached is the Weekly Report to the Secretary in Google Doc and Word formats. Please let me know if you have questions.

Thanks,

Matthew Dermody  
Special Assistant  
Office of the Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior

1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
202-513-7778

 [Weekly Report to the Secretary April 29-May 5.docx](#)

**WEEKLY REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
APRIL 29-MAY 5, 2018**

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt will be in the office all week.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Todd Willens will be on official travel April 29 - May 3. He will be holding meetings with NPS and FWS employees, partners, and gateway communities in or around San Juan, Puerto Rico and Houston, Texas.

Associate Deputy Secretary Jim Cason will be in the office all week.

**Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

In late April or early May, consistent with the President's commitment to improved permitting, the Department plans to distribute additional guidance to its Assistant Secretaries, Bureau Directors, and NEPA Practitioners to facilitate compliance with E.O. 13807 and S.O. 3355. This guidance builds on CEQ and Department regulations that require Environmental Impact Statements to be completed within 150 pages (300 pages for complex circumstances), replaces the EIS surnaming process with a briefing schedule, and directs Decision Files to be compiled contemporaneously to EIS development and drafting.

**15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

No updates to report.

**Awareness**

No updates to report.

**OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Congressional Hearings, and Travel**

Chimney Tops Fire Briefing for Tort Claims Attorneys

On April 24, the Knoxville Field Solicitor will assist the superintendent and deputy superintendent of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park as they brief attorneys from the new Torts Law Unit on the causes of the fires that destroyed 2400 structures and killed 14 people on November 28, 2016, just outside the park's boundary. Some 200 administrative tort claims have been filed that allege the deaths and destruction are attributable to the failure of the National Park Service (NPS) to extinguish a small fire on The Chimney Tops that was set by arsonists on



November 23, 2016. The claimants allege that the small fire on Chimney Tops was allowed to spread outside the boundaries of the park by the negligent failure of NPS employees to extinguish it.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

#### **NEW CASES:**

##### *LPFW and CBD v. BLM*

On April 20, Appellants filed an appeal and request for stay of a Bakersfield Field Office March 16, decision to approve E&B Natural Resources Management Corporation's Russell Ranch Oil Field Application for Permit to Drill (APD) for New Well Schlaudeman #354-23 and a new pipeline. Appellants also filed a request for State Director review pursuant to 43 C.F.R. § 3165.3(b). These facilities are located within the Carrizo Plain National Monument and Appellants claim the decision fails to protect monument objects, is inconsistent with the applicable resource management plan (RMP), and violates the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The response to the stay petition is due within 10 days of service (i.e., April 30); Appellants' Statement of Reasons is due within 30 days of filing the appeal (i.e., May 20); our answer is due by June 20.

##### *Tugaw Ranches, LLC v. DOI* (D. ID Filed 4/12/18)

Plaintiffs are ranchers that have filed suit challenging the 2015 Greater Sage Grouse plans as "rules" that were reviewable under the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. § 551(4)).

##### *Cavazos v. Zinke* (D.D.C.)

A group of dis-enrollees brings several claims under the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan Distribution of Judgment Funds Act (Judgment Funds Act or Act) and the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). They argue that the Department has failed to enforce the Judgment Funds Act and that the Act imposes a requirement on the Secretary of the Interior to enforce the Act's requirements. Plaintiffs were dis-enrolled starting in 2016, and they claim the Department has a duty to protect them after the Tribal Council discriminated against them and failed to properly administer the Investment Fund set up under the Act. They also argue, under the APA, that the Department violated its duty to act reasonably and not abuse its discretion. Finally, they bring an undue delay claim related to an October 2016 Petition/Request they submitted to the Department. The Request asked the Secretary to enforce the Act by: (1) preventing the Tribe from continuing disenrollment of Plaintiffs; and (2) directing the Tribe to reinstate or re-enroll the Plaintiffs it had already dis-enrolled.

##### *Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) v. Zinke* (D.D.C.)

This case, filed on April 12, challenges the Service's failure to make a 12-month finding on CBD's 2013 petition to list the Tinian monarch, a small bird endemic to the island of Tinian in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

#### **SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:**

*Butte County, Calif. v. Chaudhuri* (D.C. Cir.)

In a published opinion, the D.C. Circuit (Rogers, Srinivasan, and Pillard) affirmed a district court judgment in favor of the Department of the Interior in a challenge a remand decision by the Department to take land into trust for the Mechoopda Indian Tribe for gaming. The Department had originally approved the Tribe's request in 2008, deeming the land eligible for gaming as "restored land" under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. However Butte County successfully challenged the Department's failure to consider a historical report submitted by the County, and the D.C. Circuit ultimately remanded for further consideration. On remand, the Department considered the report and additional information from the parties and again approved the Tribe's request, which Butte County also challenged, raising procedural and substantive arguments under the APA. The D.C. Circuit affirmed the district court decision rejecting the County's challenges. The D.C. Circuit found that the Department had not abused its discretion on remand by reopening the record, giving the Tribe a 15-day extension of time, or setting a 20-day response deadline for Butte County. The Department complied with the procedural requirements of an "informal adjudication" under the APA. On the substance, the court found that the Department had rationally explained its decision, which was supported by evidence in the administrative record. The Court rejected the County's attempt to inject new evidence that was not in the record at the time the Department made its decision. The decision survived arbitrary-and-capricious review.

*United States of America and State of Wisconsin v. Tecumseh Products Co., Thomas Industries, Inc., and Wisconsin Public Service Corporation* (E.D. Wis.)

The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin entered a consent decree on April 17, resolving the U.S. and State of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) natural resource damage claims related to the Sheboygan River and Harbor Site. The natural resource trustees for the site will receive approximately \$4.5 million in a settlement with Tecumseh Products Co., Thomas Industries, Inc., and Wisconsin Public Service Corporation. The recovery will be used to fund wetland and riparian restoration; wetland, riparian, and ecologically-associated upland preservation; and recreational enhancement projects within the Sheboygan River Basin within Sheboygan County. Trustees include the U.S. Department of the Interior, acting through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the U.S. Department of Commerce, acting through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The three companies -- Tecumseh Products Co., Thomas Industries, Inc., and Wisconsin Public Service Corporation -- all operated at the Sheboygan River and Harbor remedial site, and are involved in cleanup efforts led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:**

*Western Watersheds Project (WWP), et al. v. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)* (D. Ariz.) Plaintiffs, WWP and Sierra Club, filed this APA action alleging that BLM violated NEPA because its environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Sonoran Desert National Monument RMP failed to take a hard look and because it relied on arbitrary land health evaluation and grazing compatibility analysis. The district court held in favor of Plaintiffs and remanded the matter, but retained jurisdiction. An annual status report is due to the court on May 1.

*James Lee Williams v. United States* (Fed. Cir.)

In May 2017, James Lee Williams filed a complaint against the United States, claiming that the Bureau of Reclamation and BLM, among other non-federal defendants, violated his constitutional rights by denying him the right to acquire land and water rights on an area of land in the Colorado River known as Yuma Island. Mr. Williams is seeking \$25 million in damages. The court granted the United States' motion to dismiss, and closed the case on January 31. On March 12, Plaintiff filed a notice of appeal in the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Plaintiff's opening brief is due April 27, and the United States' responsive brief is due on May 4.

*San Juan County v. United States* (D. Utah)

On February 23, San Juan County served the U.S. Attorney's Office with a new Quiet Title Act (QTA) complaint seeking title to a right-of-way under R.S. 2477 for an alleged road down Recapture Canyon in southeastern Utah. Unlike the 12,000 plus R.S. 2477 claims pending in other QTA cases and subject to the Utah court's bellwether process, the State of Utah is not currently a co-plaintiff. On April 17, the district court granted United States' unopposed motion for a 60-day extension of time in which to respond to the complaint. We hope to consolidate this case with the other San Juan County cases subject to the bellwether process.

*Friends of Animals v. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Serv.* (S. Ct.) - Petition for Certiorari

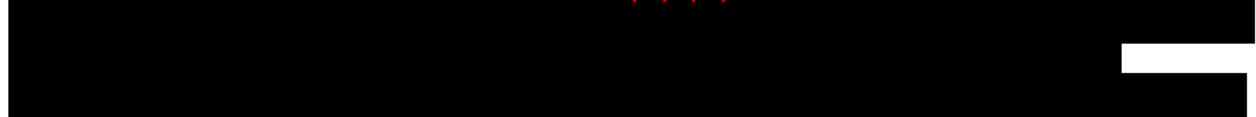
Plaintiffs challenged a Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) scientific permit authorizing the take of barred owls in three separate control areas to determine the effect of their removal on northern spotted owls. Friends' primary argument is that FWS may not authorize the take of one species to improve conservation or scientific understanding of another without violating the MBTA and its underlying treaties. Plaintiffs lost at both the District Court and the Ninth Circuit. Plaintiffs filed their petition on April 10.

*UPDATE: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians v. Coachella Valley Water District, et al.* (C.D. Cal.)

On February 28, at the invitation of the Ninth Circuit after the U.S. Supreme Court's denial of certiorari in November 2017, the parties to this litigation involving the Agua Caliente Band's reserved right to groundwater had an initial mediation meeting with retired Circuit Judge Edward Leavy. Each party provided a statement of issues prior to the meeting. During the initial session, the water districts outlined a proposal for consideration, and Coachella Valley Water District circulated a term sheet to the mediator and other parties on March 23. *The term sheet will be discussed at a follow-up session is scheduled for April 25, in Palm Springs. The United States sent Judge Leavy and the other parties examples of settlement agreements and accompanying legislation that have been completed in southern California and that have involved some of the counsel associated with this case.* Meanwhile, the federal district court postponed oral arguments regarding Phase II issues from March 2018, and rescheduled it for April 26, as requested by the parties to coincide with the mediation session occurring the day before. Phase II addresses three issues: whether the Tribe owns pore space underlying its Reservation; whether the Tribe's water right includes a water quality component; and the appropriate standard to quantify the Tribe's water right. The water districts also raised justiciability arguments, including standing and ripeness. As part of its postponement order, the court indicated that it will only hear argument concerning standing and water quality issues.

*In re General Adjudication of All Rights to Use Water in the Little Colorado River System and Source*, Civ. 6417 (Apache County Superior Court) - Hopi Claims

The Lower Colorado River (LCR) Adjudication has been ongoing since 1985 and in active litigation of the Hopi Tribe's claims for several years. Discovery recently closed with respect to the past and present water uses on the Hopi Reservation, and the court set an April 27, deadline for dispositive motions in this portion the case. (b) (5)



*Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Society, et al. v. Zinke* (D. Alaska)

On April 19, Plaintiffs, a consortium of environmental organizations, filed an amended complaint in which it added a new ESA claim for failure to prepare a biological assessment to its prior allegations that Secretary's planned land exchange within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge with King Cove Corporation is invalid because it does not further the purposes of ANILCA, violates Title XI of ANILCA, and violates NEPA. The government's answer to the amended complaint is due May 3.

*Sturgeon v. Frost* (Supreme Court)

The United States' response to Plaintiff's petition for a writ of certiorari is due May 7. At issue is a Ninth Circuit decision affirming NPS's authority to regulate hovercraft use on certain waters within Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Conservation System Units in Alaska. Citing the *Katie John* precedent, the Ninth Circuit held that the United States has an implied reservation of water rights in the Nation River, rendering it "public lands" for purposes of ANILCA.

*San Juan Citizens Alliance v. BLM* (D. Colo.)

On October 10, 2014, Plaintiffs filed a complaint asserting the BLM violated the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). DOJ has filed a motion to dismiss which the court denied. Discovery is complete. On April 16, at the court's request, Plaintiff filed a Status Report in which Plaintiff asked the court for leave to file its own cross-motion for Summary Judgment by April 26. Plaintiff wants to focus its summary judgment motion on two of its claims in the complaint: (1) that the BLM violated FOIA by withholding responsive documents; and (2) that two BLM employees should be held in contempt for failing to state which documents were and were not provided in a declaration ordered by the court.

*Clean Air Council v. U.S.* (E.D. Pa.) - Climate Change

Plaintiffs have filed their opposition to our motion to dismiss. The court has stayed discovery, probably until it rules on the motion to dismiss. On April 20, the court continued the pretrial conference and ordered the United States to reply by May 3, to Plaintiffs' response to our motion to dismiss, and to respond to plaintiffs' claims about state-created danger and deprivation of life, liberty and property. This case is similar to the *Juliana* case in the District of Oregon.

*Petro-Hunt, L.L.C. v. U.S.* (U.S. Supreme Court) - Judicial Taking

Petro-Hunt filed a petition for a writ of certiorari last February, presenting the question whether a claimant may obtain compensation in the Court of Federal Claims for an asserted Fifth

Amendment taking of private property by a federal court of appeals decision. The government filed a brief in opposition on April 4. On April 18, Petro-Hunt filed its reply brief, arguing that the Court should grant certiorari to address the constitutional contours of federal judicial takings under the Fifth Amendment. The case is conferenced for May 10. If the Court is inclined to deny review at that conference, we should learn of the disposition on May 14.

*Sierra Club, et al. v Zinke* (4th Cir. 18-1082, 18-1083)

Reply briefs were filed by the DOJ on April 19, in this matter related to the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Petitioners challenge FWS' issuance of a Biological Opinion, and NWS' issuance of a right-of-way and construction permit.

*Curtis Temple v. Cleve Her Many Horses, Superintendent, Pine Ridge Agency, BIA* (D.S.D.)

On March 26, Temple filed a motion in the civil case asking the judge to “clarify” that the previous Order staying the case pending resolution of the criminal case also prohibits the BIA “barring” Temple’s bids for grazing permits. The motion was based on the Tribe’s recent denial of his 2017 grazing permit application because of the outstanding debt Temple owes for previous trespasses. On April 16, the Court denied Temple’s motion because the Tribe is not a party to the case.

*United States v. Howell* (D. Idaho filed April 19, 2016); *Howell v. United States Department of the Interior* (9th Cir.)

In 2014, the United States initiated affirmative litigation against the Howells for trespass, ejectment, nuisance, and conversion in connection with their illegal use and occupation of land and resources owned by the United States in trust for the Nez Perce Tribe and a group of Indian allottees. On February 12, the parties reached an agreement-in-principle to settle the litigation. At the February 15, scheduling conference, the parties asked for 45 days within which to finalize the settlement and submit it to the court for approval. Subsequently, the court set a deadline of April 18 for the submission. On April 23, counsel for the Howells informed the Department of Justice that the parties are at an irreconcilable impasse and that the draft agreement reducing the agreement-in-principle to writing did not reflect their understanding of the settlement terms. The DOJ attorney assigned to the matter has notified the District Court of the impasse.

*Weyerhaeuser v. USFWS*, No. 17-71 (S. Ct.) - Dusky Gopher Frog Critical Habitat

FWS’s critical habitat designation for the endangered dusky gopher frog included an area currently unoccupied by species that is also in its current condition not suitable for the species, based on FWS’s determination that the area was nonetheless essential for the conservation of the species. Property owners challenged the designation; their arguments were rejected by the district court and a closely divided *en banc* panel of the Fifth Circuit. The Supreme Court accepted cert. In their opening briefs, plaintiffs argue (1) that the area at issue is neither “habitat” for nor essential for the species and (2) that the lower courts erred in holding that decisions not to exclude areas from critical habitat are not judicially reviewable. DOJ/ENRD wants comments from DOI on a draft brief by May 10.

*Kansas Natural Resource Coalition v. U.S. DOI* (D. Kan.) - Congressional Review Act Challenge to the PECE

In 2003, FWS and NOAA issued the “Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions” (PECE), which the agencies use in determining whether to list species under the Endangered Species Act. On April 10, a group of western Kansas counties filed a complaint arguing that FWS violated the Congressional Review Act (CRA) by not submitting PECE to Congress, as they allege the Congressional Review Act requires. Threshold issues in the litigation will include whether the CRA is judicially reviewable, and whether any claim is barred by the statute of limitations.

*Kansas Natural Resource Coalition v. U.S. DOI* (D. Kan.) - Congressional Review Act Challenge to the PECE

On April 10, a group of western Kansas counties that developed a conservation plan for the lesser prairie-chicken in 2013, filed this case alleging that FWS violated the Congressional Review Act by not submitting the “Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions” (PECE) to Congress, as they allege the Congressional Review Act requires. DOJ has advised us that several courts have dismissed similar claims because 5 U.S.C. § 805 in the CRA rules out judicial review.

*Caldwell v. United States of America*

An agreement has tentatively been made in a Quiet Title action filed in the Western District of Arkansas regarding farming and hunting property adjacent to the Overflow National Wildlife Refuge. Specifically, the parties have agreed to relocate the boundary with a prescriptive easement across a road for access. The agreement is considered a good comprised for all parties.

**NON-LITIGATION MATTERS:**

**Twin Metals Lease Reinstatement**

The Solicitor’s Office has reviewed and surnamed a draft decision letter that would reinstate two Twin Metals leases in northern Minnesota that were issued in 2004 and also reinstate a lease renewal application that the company filed in 2012. We have coordinated with the Justice Department in preparation for any litigation that might arise as a result of this decision. We understand that the Acting BLM Eastern States Director will sign the decision and an Acting Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management will concur in the decision later this week.

**Implementation of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement**

Under procedures developed by the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office (SIWRO), the Division of Water Resources (DWR) provides support in the implementation of this recently enacted settlement, including drafting various documents necessary for the Secretary's execution of the settlement agreement and related documents. As part of this process, the Solicitor’s Office requests formal concurrence from the Department of Justice in our view that (b) (5)

■ (b) (5) Meanwhile, DWR will provide a draft recommendation from SOL to the Secretary to the Front Office for review and finalization this week. SIWRO advises that a signing ceremony may be scheduled for mid-May.

Recommended Approval of an Alcohol Ordinance and Surnamed a Federal Register Notice  
Legal review was completed on a proposed Alcoholic Beverage Control Ordinance submitted by the Cayuga Nation of New York. The ordinance establishes a tribal Alcohol Commission that will regulate the possession, sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages within the exterior boundaries of tribal land within the State of New York. The ability to sell alcohol is part of the Tribe's expanding economic development plan. After a legal sufficiency review, the proposed Federal Register Notice was approved and surnamed.

The Governor has Not Signed the Bill that will Enable Tennessee to Take Over Primary Enforcement of SMCRA from OSMRE

On April 11, following a four-year push by the state's coal mining industry, both the Tennessee House and Senate approved legislation to have the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) become the primary regulatory authority for the enforcement of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. However, a coalition of 20 environmental groups, including the Sierra Club, delivered a letter to Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam this week urging him to veto the bill. They warned that if the bill is signed into law it will "significantly weaken protections relating to coal mining in Tennessee." As of the submission of this report, the governor has not signed the bill.

Enforcement Issues - (b) (5)

Members of the Knoxville Field Solicitor's Office and Division of Mineral Resources (DMR) continue to advise Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) regarding new violations and enforcement options. OSMRE is consulting with other state and federal agencies about the best ways and means to enforce Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) and the Clean Water Act (CWA) under the current circumstances.

Timber Trespass Action

The Knoxville Field Office is assisting the Eastern Regional Office of BIA and DOJ respond to a recent timber trespass incident. This incident involves multiple members of the Narragansett Tribe who hired an outside contractor to remove trees and excavate a site alleged to be part of the tribal trust lands. It is not clear that they have the right to remove those trees. A BIA investigation is underway to determine whether the excavated property is in trust status or is tribally owned. Damage may also have occurred to an archaeological site.

Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) Program: Obama Presidential Center in Jackson Park, Chicago

The City of Chicago plans to allow the construction of the Obama Presidential Center in Jackson Park. The Park is protected by the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Act (54 U.S.C. § 200501) which allows conversion to non-recreation uses only upon the identification of suitable replacement recreation opportunity. The Act does not give NPS authority to permit or approve any building construction that takes place after the conversion has been approved. DPW is assisting the UPARR program in identifying the appropriate scope of NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) compliance associated with removing the recreation restriction at the site and finding replacement property elsewhere.

Union Soldier Remains Discovered at Manassas



The National Parks Branch is advising Manassas Battlefield Park and the NPS National Capital Region regarding issues relating to the discovery and disinterment of the remains of 2 union soldiers killed in the 2nd Battle of Bull Run that were discovered in the Park in 2015. The NPS is currently involved in consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA. The Park's Branch is advising regarding a memorandum of agreement with the Army to facilitate the transfer of the remains to the Arlington National Cemetery for reburial a potential programmatic agreement regarding the handling of any future remains discovered.

#### Liberty Final Environmental Impact Statement

SOL is scheduled to provide BOEM with its comments and advice concerning the Liberty preliminary Final EIS on April 25. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM's) analysis of impacts from upstream and downstream greenhouse gas emissions will be a key issue in the Final EIS. Staff from DMR and the Alaska Region discussed this issue during an April 19, teleconference and reached consensus on a way forward.

#### CERCLA Time-Critical Removal Action Eureka, Nevada Smelters Site

BLM's Mt. Lewis Field Office seeks Pacific Southwest Regional SOL review of a draft memo to the District Manager re: a CERCLA time critical removal action for arsenic and lead present in the surface soil of a parcel under the administrative jurisdiction of the BLM in Eureka NV. Failure to join in on-going surface cleanup being conducted by EPA will result in the expenditure of increased funds by the BLM.

#### Muscogee (Creek) Land in Trust Decision

The Department hopes to announce the on-Reservation fee-to-trust decision for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation on Monday, April 30th. PDAS Tahsuda will be in Tulsa, Oklahoma speaking at an event for the Five Tribes on this date. This is an architecturally-significant property and former State Lodge that would be used for gaming. It is supported by Governor Fallin and has been socialized by OCL with the delegation.

#### Arch Coal PRLAs in New Mexico

On April 26, the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee will again discuss Senate bill S. 436 (February 16, 2017) authorizing the BLM to issue bidding credits to compensate Arch Coal for its coal preference right lease applications (PRLAs) in New Mexico, which Arch could use to bid on coal or royalty payments elsewhere. The bill would also cancel existing Navajo Nation selections in New Mexico under the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act and would authorize the Navajo to make new selections of up to 15,000 acres from public lands in New Mexico within 18 miles of the present Navajo Nation boundary -- excluding BLM specially-designated areas such as National Conservation Lands and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

#### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) Production Safety Systems Rulemaking

DMR has worked diligently over the past two weeks to support BSEE's efforts to finalize this Rule, including over the two past weekends. Today BSEE is submitting the final preamble, regulatory text, and Regulatory Impacts Analysis to Department management for approval. Work on the Environmental Assessment is ongoing, with a target of April 25 for completion.



#### BOEM 5-Year Program

On April 25, DMR will be meeting with BOEM's Acting Director and his staff to discuss matters relevant to the upcoming Secretarial briefing on the next decisional stages in the National Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Leasing Program development process. The Secretarial briefing is expected to occur in May.

#### Proper Instrument for Development of Wild and Scenic River Handbook

Obed Wild and Scenic River (WSR) National Park staff are drafting a new handbook and would like to work with an NPS cooperating association to design, print, distribute and market the handbook. They asked whether a cooperative agreement is a proper legal instrument or whether they might have to pursue a contract. We have provided guidance on NPS' cooperative authority.

#### Research Trademark Displaying "National Park Geek" with the Junior Ranger Logo

An individual having no affiliation with NPS registered a trademark at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) that displays the Junior Ranger logo with the phrase "National Park Geek." This trademark could potentially cause confusion with NPS marks due to the misappropriation of the "National Park" name and use of the ranger uniform and, in turn, hurt NPS's partner, the National Park Foundation's, licensing sales. We are researching the possibility of (b) (5)

#### Dieringer Dairy Acquisition

In 2014, the Civil Chief for the Eastern District of Washington's U.S. Attorney's Office assisted the Department to acquire through mediation 125.2 acres of land located in Grant County, Washington, for the Potholes Supplemental Feed Route, a new feature of Reclamation's Columbia Basin Project. The parties settled for \$1.9 million, about \$500,000 over appraised value). The closing was set for December 15, 2016. However, the Dieringers refused to attend closing since they assert that they should receive additional monies for the fixtures and other like property that should be valued separately but was valued appropriately in the appraisal and included in the land sale purchase agreement as appurtenances. Since 2016, the parties have not been able to negotiate a resolution over the outstanding issues, but both sides have agreed to a site visit on April 23, and to a further mediation in the near future.

#### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Significant Litigation Deadlines are reported separately.

#### **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS**

#### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

From April 30-May 4, Susan Combs, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, will be holding listening sessions on the DOI reorganization (Denver, Albuquerque, Grand Junction, and Cheyenne).

From April 30-May 4, Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith and Deputy Assistant Secretary Ryan Hambleton will be in the office.

From May 4-7, FWS Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan will be on leave.

From May 4-7, NPS Deputy Director Dan Smith will be in the office.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**[NEW]** On April 30, FWS will publish in the *Federal Register* a regulatory review of the 2017 Final Rule on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly bear. FWS published a Notice of Regulatory Review on December 7, 2017, requesting public comment on any potential effects a D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling (*Humane Society of the United States, et al. v. Zinke et al.*) might have on the final rule delisting the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly bear distinct population segment. The review of comments is complete, and FWS has determined that the final rule does not require modification. FWS affirms the decision that the population of grizzly bears is recovered and should be delisted under the Endangered Species Act. Outreach includes a regional news release and web postings. An if-asked Q&A has been prepared. (04/25/2018)

On or around April 30, pending approval by DOI, FWS expects publication in the *Federal Register* of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct a 30-day public scoping period and prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Skookumchuck Wind Energy Project Habitat Conservation Plan. The EIS will evaluate the issuance of an incidental take permit for marbled murrelet, bald eagle and golden eagle at a proposed wind energy project in Lewis County, Washington. The project is expected to be controversial with conservation organizations (*e.g.*, American Bird Conservancy, National Audubon Society, Washington Forest Law Center). FWS has received two Freedom of Information Act requests related to the project. A communications plan has been shared with FWS HQ; outreach announcing the public scoping period is planned for Washington media, congressional office, local and state officials, tribes, and stakeholders. (03/07/2018)

In late April or May, FWS plans to publish a rule removing the textual descriptions of the critical habitat boundaries from certain wildlife entries that have maps sufficient to stand as the official delineation of the critical habitat designation. This rule does not increase, decrease, or in any other way change the critical habitat designations from which we are removing the textual descriptions of boundaries. This action will save taxpayer resources. FWS is taking this action in accordance with the May 1, 2012, revision of the regulations related to publishing textual descriptions of critical habitat boundaries. No outreach is planned. (Updated 04/18/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In late April or May, pending clearance by DOI, FWS will make a final determination on the proposal to reclassify the Tobusch fishhook cactus from endangered to threatened. This plant species has shown significant recovery due in part to collaborative conservation efforts with partners. Supporters of this action include the Texas Parks and Wildlife

Department, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and The Nature Conservancy. FWS has gained positive coverage on downlisting proposals, and anticipates more interest when this final determination is announced. A communications plan has developed that includes outreach to congressional offices, local and state officials and stakeholders, a news release to media and posting information on social media is planned at time of publication in the *Federal Register*.

In April or May, the FWS will release less than 14-day-old captive-born Mexican wolf pups into established wild Mexican wolf dens on federal land in Arizona and New Mexico. Arizona Game and Fish Department's Mexican wolf field team personnel (part of the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team) lead the cross-fostering efforts in Arizona. New Mexico does not play a role except for providing permits to release cross-fostered pups into New Mexico. The window of opportunity is very narrow to identify pups born in captivity with a den of pups in the wild that are very close in age (under a week old). The Mexican wolf recovery team will only have a very short time (72 - 48 hours) to get a cross-foster mission lined up for execution. Because of that, in the draft news release to announce a successful cross-foster event, the dates in draft will be open. Select reporters will be invited to attend. FWS will send a news release summarizing these cross-fostering efforts to media and stakeholders at the end of May or early June. Typically FWS will not announce until a successful cross-foster event is completed. Last year, two pups were flown in but the den in the wild could not be located. (04/04/2018)

On or before May 1, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposed rule and open a 30-day public comment period on the 2018-19 Refuge-Specific Hunting and Sport Fishing Regulations. The proposed rule would open up to 28 various national wildlife refuges to hunting and/or sport fishing for the first time and expand hunting and fishing opportunities at others. Outreach is planned to include a national news release when the *Federal Register* notice is published and notifications to members of Congress in affected districts, with some stakeholder outreach. (03/28/2018)

[UPDATE] Around May 4, FWS will begin testing a Monarch Conservation Database. As part of the Species Status Assessment process for the monarch, FWS is developing the database to record conservation plans and actions that benefit monarch butterflies. FWS will launch the database in three phases. The first phase begins between May 4 and May 11 when FWS opens the database to a select group for user testing; the second phase will begin two to three weeks later when it is made available to all users to enter data; and the third phase will make the database available to users to access and view data. The information in the database will help the Service and monarch conservation partners continue working strategically to improve conditions for monarchs. The database is also a tool for conducting the Species Status Assessment and for determining whether listing as an endangered species is warranted. FWS will notify stakeholders and potential database users of the launch; wider outreach is not anticipated. (Updated 04/25/2018)

[UPDATE] The week of May 7 is tentatively selected for outreach, including selective media coverage, for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FWS and Monsanto. In addition to the week of May 7, a field-based demonstration event is being planned for late summer/early fall. FWS Midwest Region has been exploring the possibility of a partnership with

Monsanto, and its subsidiaries, to use modern agriculture data tools to help landowners voluntarily manage their land to enhance pollinator habitat while maximizing production in their fields. Monsanto and FWS developed the MOU to outline how they will work together to: 1) provide accurate and useful information to farmers; 2) analyze data to determine the outcomes of conservation actions and make it easy for landowners to have access to conservation programs should they choose to participate; and 3) to explore the possibilities to use these tools for other cooperative conservation efforts across the country. (Updated 04/25/2018)

On May 8, FWS Northeast Regional Director Wendi Weber will give a keynote address at the 36th Annual National Native American Fish and Wildlife Society Conference. This year's conference is hosted by the Narragansett Tribe and is being held in Providence, Rhode Island. FWS will provide presentations on coastal resilience projects in Rhode Island, eagle policy and permitting, white-nose syndrome in bats, and a possible field trip to the Rhode Island NWR complex. (04/11/2018)

#### National Park Service

On May 1, Councillor Yamada Hiroshi, member of the Upper House of the National Diet of Japan, will visit WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument. This is a follow-up visit to the one he made in September 2017. He will meet with NPS staff and is interested in learning how the park's exhibits were designed to include both US and Japanese perspectives at Pearl Harbor. (04/18/18)

On May 1, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park plans to send a letter to the town of Cumberland Gap (Tennessee) for restitution according to the Park System Resource Protection Act (54 U.S. Code § 100721) in the amount of \$1,110.71. The restitution is related to a diesel spill that took place on February 11, 2018, within the park's boundary in Gap Creek. (04/18/18) **(Close Hold)**

By May 1, the Missouri Department of Agriculture will issue its findings relative to the improper use of herbicides by a private contractor to the NPS on NPS lands at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. The over application occurred in the Summer and Fall of 2016 and its effect became evident in the Spring of 2017. Some 170 trees show signs of mortality and stress. The contractor has been cooperative to date and has indicated willingness to make restitution for damages. The NPS is working to evaluate the best approach to restore resources. (04/18/18)

On May 1, the Blue Ridge Parkway will host a public information meeting in Roanoke, Virginia, to spotlight upcoming projects and visitor improvements planned during the 2018 visitor season. A broad range of projects will include major paving and bridge projects, citizen science projects, and restoration of historic views at parkway overlooks. This meeting is the second in a series to kick off the visitor season. The first meeting, held in Asheville, North Carolina, on February 28, was attended by an est. 200 people and was very well received. Park partners will also be participating to showcase their role(s) in supporting the NPS and improving visitor experiences. Media are invited. (04/11/18).

Around May 1-15, Death Valley National Park and Mojave National Preserve will begin efforts to relocate up to 2,500 feral burros from each park. Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue (a nonprofit partner) will fund and carry out the roundups, test burros for disease, relocate them to holding facilities, and domesticate the animals for adoption. This is anticipated to generate public interest. (Updated 04/18/18)

Between May 1-15, the NPS plans to release a prospectus for five concession contracts to provide cruise ship services at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Two of the contracts are set aside for the two historic operators identified through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) legislation. Cruise ship services contracts have been awarded since 1980 on a 10 year basis. New contract terms are similar to previous contracts, shaped in accordance with both Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve-specific legislation and NPS law and policy. Contracts will be awarded by late October, 2019. The prospectus is in final Department and Solicitor review. (Updated 04/11/18).

On May 3, the 30-day public review period will close for the Theodore Roosevelt Island Cultural Landscape Report and Environmental Assessment (CLR/EA). The preferred alternative includes rehabilitating the comfort station, better defining and improving the islands trail system, and establishing soft landings and a floating dock on the island for non-motorized boats. The park will host a public meeting on the island the week of April 16. (Updated 04/04/18).

**[NEW]** By May 4, the Notice of Availability for the draft Acadia National Park transportation plan/environmental impact study is expected to be published in the federal register. The park's communication plan outlines a comprehensive approach to the public and stakeholder engagement over the course of the 60 day comment period - including several meetings with stakeholders, local government, and public workshops. Information on the plan and public meetings will be made available via social media, press releases, the park website, and on PEPC at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/documentsList.cfm?projectID=58482> (4/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 4, Olympic National Park will issue a joint news release with the U.S. Forest Service and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife announcing the publication of the Mountain Goat Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. (Updated 4/25/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 4, Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) plans to host a press conference outside the Visitor Center at White Sands National Monument to announce the *White Sands National Park Establishment Act*, which aims to designate the monument as a national park and finalize a land exchange with White Sands Missile Range. Park staff plan to issue a First Amendment permit to the senator for the press conference; park staff is not participating in the event. (4/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 4, Death Valley National Park will issue a news release announcing the publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register for the Draft Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Saline Valley Warm Springs (plan/DEIS). The NOA will initiate a 60-day public comment period on the document during which public meetings will be held in the vicinity of the park. The plan/DEIS is intended to

provide a framework for natural and cultural resource management, administration and operations, and managing visitor use. [PEPC link](#) (4/25/2018)

By May 4, the NPS expects to publish a Call for Nominations notice in the Federal Register requesting people to serve on the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, authorized by Public Law 115-102. The purpose of the commission is to develop and carry out activities throughout the United States to commemorate the arrival of Africans in the English colonies in 1619. Also in process is a letter to governors requesting nominees to serve on the commission. (Updated 04/18/18)

On May 4, the NPS intends to terminate the environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Capitol Reef National Park (CRNP) Livestock Grazing and Trailing Management Plan (LGTMP) and instead move forward with an Environmental Assessment (EA). In March 2018, one of the two remaining grazing permit holders willingly sold their grazing permit to a non-profit and also relinquished in writing their right to graze livestock in CRNP. As such, the NPS is revising the LGTMP to address the one remaining grazing allotment and trailing routes through CRNP. Based on public and agency scoping, as well as impact analysis conducted to date, implementation of the LGTMP on the remaining allotment and trails throughout the park would not have significant impacts; therefore, the proposal is to terminate the EIS and instead move forward with the preparation of an EA for the LGTMP. The EA will analyze the impacts of livestock grazing from the remaining permittee and trailing on park resources and is intended to guide future adaptive management decisions. In 1988, Congress authorized grazing privileges to permit holders and their children born on or before the date CRNP became a national park. Our current schedule calls for releasing the EA in the Summer of 2018, with a final decision in the Fall of 2018. (Updated 04/18/18)

On May 5, Shenandoah National Park will be included in the route of the Kyle Petty Charity Ride. Created 24 years ago by NASCAR driver Kyle Petty, the charity ride draws significant media attention and raises millions of dollars for children's charities. The 220 riders on 134 motorcycles and support vehicles plan to drive the full length of the park as part of their East Coast tour from Maine to South Carolina. Arriving in the morning at the North Entrance in Front Royal, the group will stop midday at the Byrd Visitor Center and Big Meadows Wayside Restaurant, and exit the park later in the afternoon via the Rockfish Gap Entrance Station. The event is expected to have no impact on park resources nor cause any delays on Skyline Drive. There has been significant local media interest. (04/18/18)

**[UPDATE]** On May 6, Yosemite National Park will complete a pilot a traffic management program aimed at increasing safety and minimizing long lines at the Arch Rock Entrance Station on California Route 140. The park is working with the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to temporarily stop vehicles on the road leading to the park, allowing traffic to incrementally enter the park on the popular road. This is one of the pilot programs the park is implementing to address traffic congestion, ensure visitor access, and address safety concerns for park visitors. (Updated 04/25/18)

On May 7, the 15-day public review and comment period will end for the Glacier National Park *Sperry Chalet, The Next 100 Years Environmental Assessment* (EA). Two public meetings have



already been held. The EA will identify the NPS' preferred alternative, which is to use existing remnant walls to rebuild the structure, replicating and retaining as many historic character features as is practicable, and achieving some modernization in design. The EA will identify two construction seasons. NPS is investigating options for funding, design and construction and assessing the feasibility of construction activity that begins in the summer of 2018 and estimated completion in 2019. (Updated 04/18/18)

By May 7, the NPS expects to complete a land exchange between Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO). The NPS will convey an easement valued at \$41,000 to NIPSCO, allowing them to install a 24" diameter high-pressure natural gas line on Federal land. In exchange, NIPSCO will convey fee title to the United States for Tract 02-198 valued at \$17,000, in addition to a cash payment of \$24,000 into the Land and Water Conservation Fund, resulting in an equal value exchange. (04/04/18).

Between May 7 - 10, a NPS planning team will host several public meetings throughout the State of Mississippi as part of the civic engagement phase of a special resource study (SRS) looking at significant civil rights sites in Mississippi, including locations related to the life and murder of Medgar Evers, the lynching of Emmett Till and the murder of three freedom riders. The team will visit five different communities across the state containing resources that were identified in the legislation requiring the SRS. The study will evaluate the potential for inclusion of each site in the national park system based on whether it meets Congressionally-established criteria for significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management. Representatives from Congressman Bennie Thompson's office and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History are expected to participate in the public meetings. PEPC site: [https://parkplanning.nps.gov/MSCR\\_SRS](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/MSCR_SRS) (04/18/18).

**[NEW]** Between May 7 - 25, a spending plan will be developed and submitted to the Department for approval for the new Historic Preservation Fund grant program subgrant program (yet to be named). \$5.0 million in physical preservation funding was passed as part of the FY 2018 budget to grant "block grant" funding to organizations that will subgrant funding to historic properties of national, State, and local significance listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Development of a spending plan was mandated in the appropriations language. Preservation partners may have questions about the stage of development of this program. (4/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 7 – 25, State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices may apply for the remaining funding from the FY 2018 Annual HPF grants that is noticed on [Grants.gov](https://www.dhs.gov/grants). The application deadline 6/30/18. (Updated 4/25/2018)

During the week of May 7, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area staff are participating in a four-day workshop hosted by BLM to discuss alternatives regarding the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument and Kanab Field Office – Escalante Area Resource Management Plans. On April 10, the park and the BLM held its first cooperating agency meeting. The NPS agreed to be a cooperating agency during this planning effort with Glen Canyon National Recreation Area functioning as the NPS point of contact. Consolidated comments from all involved NPS park units were reviewed by the regional office and sent to the BLM on April 13. (04/18/18)

On May 8, pending an updated wage determination from Department of Labor (DOL), Golden Gate National Recreation Area's General Agreement and associated draft leases for the long-term use of Pier 31 ½ as the Alcatraz ferry embarkation site will be considered by the San Francisco Port Commission for approval. This item was before the commission on February 27; however, commissioners continued the vote in response to concerns raised by labor unions about the concession contract DOL wage determination and other labor-related issues. (Updated 04/11/18).

*[NEW]* On May 9, Devils Postpile National Monument will announce the temporary summer closure to camping at its 20-site campground to accommodate expanded day-use. The campground area will be open for parking, picnicking, and provide improved river access for fishing. The monument will be developing a long-term plan for the campground to better meet visitor needs. Campers will be encouraged to use the six U.S. Forest Service campground located in the immediate vicinity of the park. (4/25/2018)

By May 10, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Bonnie Clare Road Reconstruction Environmental Assessment and FONSI. Reconstruction work is scheduled to start in August 2018 and be completed by May 2019. This will allow reopening of the northeast entrance to the park and restore public access to Scotty's Castle after massive damage from flooding in October 2015. [PEPC link](#) (Updated 04/18/18)

By May 10, Death Valley National Park and the Ridgecrest BLM office anticipate opening a public comment period on the Keystone Mine Plan of Operations Amendment and accompanying Environmental Assessment. The mine is on BLM land near the park's western border, but the mining plan includes the use of water rights within the park. (updated 04/18/18).

On May 10-11, the NPS will hold public forums and stakeholder sessions to present the [Savannah National Historic Landmark District Integrity & Assessment](#) report. Public comments on the report are also being accepted through June 30. (04/18/18)

Between May 10-30, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Scotty's Castle Flood Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment and FONSI. This document analyzes repair work planned for historic structures, the cultural landscape, utilities, parking, and walkways to recover from damage from a flash flood in October 2015. The historic district is scheduled to reopen to the public in 2020. [PEPC link](#) (Updated 04/18/18)

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

On or around May 15, FWS will publish a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2019-20 hunting season. This is the first step in the annual regulatory cycle. The FWS Regulations Committee will recommend the final frameworks at their October meeting. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No



news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In mid-May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to delist the Hidden Lake bluecurls, a plant in California, due to recovery. FWS does not expect opposition to the delisting. Primary stakeholders include California Department of Parks and Recreation Mount San Jacinto State Park. Planned outreach will include a national news release and notifications to stakeholders and members of Congress. A communications plan has been shared with DOI Comms. (Updated 04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In mid-May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to reclassify Kuenzler hedgehog cactus, a plant species endemic to New Mexico, from endangered to threatened. This reclassification is not expected to be controversial. Primary stakeholders include the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service. Planned outreach includes a regional news release, emails to stakeholders, social media, and web postings. (Updated 04/25/18)

On or around May 25, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed rule to list the hyacinth macaw as threatened. To address concerns raised by the pet trade industry, FWS is including a 4(d) rule that will allow for the import and export of parrots that meet certain criteria, as well as interstate commerce in this species without a permit. Stakeholders include the bird breeding community, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, and World Wildlife Fund. Planned outreach will include a national news release and web updates. (Updated 04/18/2018)

On or around May 31, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the Colorado butterfly plant due to recovery. This species is located in Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming. This action is not expected to be opposed. Outreach plans include a national news release, and an if-asked FAQs. Key stakeholders include private landowners, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and the BLM. (Updated 04/11/2018)

**[NEW]** On or around May 31, FWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) plan to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to revise the regulations pertaining to interagency cooperation pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 402) and the procedures for listing of species and designation of critical habitat pursuant to section 4 of the Act (50 CFR 424). FWS will also propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NMFS' current practice. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. The rules are currently undergoing interagency review though OMB-OIRA. (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** In late May, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to list five Sri Lankan tarantula species as endangered. The species are in decline due to ongoing habitat loss, degradation, and the cumulative effects of this and other threat factors. This action is not expected to be controversial. Planned outreach will include web updates. (Updated 04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** By June 1, Cape Hatteras National Seashore plans to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to lease Oregon Inlet Marina. The marina is operated under a concession contract, which has been extended on an annual basis since 2000. A lease has been determined to be the appropriate method for managing the property in order to provide for facility maintenance and continued public use of this locally-important and internationally-known charter fishing marina. The RFP is expected to garner attention from multiple interested parties, including the current operator, the local media, and elected officials. (Updated 04/25/18). **(embargoed until public announcement)**

On or before June 1, FWS plans to publish in the *Federal Register* the final 2018-19 hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds. FWS annually prescribes frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the number of birds that may be taken and possessed in hunting seasons. These frameworks are necessary to allow state selections of seasons and limits and to allow recreational harvest at levels compatible with population and habitat conditions. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

On or around June 1 or later, the FWS anticipates the draft supplemental environmental impact statement for expanded public access to Rattlesnake Mountain on Hanford Reach National Monument will be available for public review and comment. This is part of the required regulatory processes to provide public access to Rattlesnake Mountain, consistent with a mandate in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA; P.L. 113-291). Section 3081 of the NDAA states “the Secretary of the Interior shall provide public access to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain for educational, recreational, historical, scientific, cultural, and other purposes, including (1) motor vehicle access; and (2) pedestrian and other non-motorized access.” The FWS established a Tribal Working Group with four local tribes and held public scoping meetings to address cultural concerns and to work through the process of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The FWS is addressing National Environmental Policy Act compliance by drafting a supplement to the 2008 Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Monument. Expanded public access will be controversial with tribes. FWS will continue outreach efforts to the tribes, media, and the public. A local news release is planned to alert cape public to comment period. (Updated 03/28/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 1 and 2, representatives from FWS, U.S. Forest Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and other partners will celebrate the proposal to delist Kirtland’s warbler. The current Kirtland’s warbler population is estimated to be over 2,000 pairs, more than double the recovery goal. The Kirtland’s warbler population continues to grow and has exceeded recovery goals for the past 16 years. FWS is accepting comments on the proposal through July 11. (04/25/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* an action designating critical habitat for three plant species on Hawaii island and is correcting the maps for existing designations for an additional four species. FWS intends to exclude lands owned or managed by the Queen Liliuokalani Trust, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and other private

landowners under 4(b)(2) of the Act. This action is not controversial. Interested stakeholders include the state of Hawaii and multiple state agencies, the county of Hawaii and various private landowners. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders mentioned above. (Updated 04/18/2018)

*[NEW]* In response to a petition to delist the species, on or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to reclassify the American burying beetle from an endangered species to a threatened species. While the primary threats to the species have been ameliorated, ongoing threats remain. FWS will also propose a rule under section 4(d) tailoring prohibitions to those most likely to harm the American burying beetle and its habitats. The American burying beetle currently occurs in Arkansas, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Texas. This finding will likely be opposed by the Center for Biological Diversity and Center for American burying beetle conservation. It is also likely to be opposed by the petitioners, American Stewards of Liberty, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Dr. Steven W. Carothers, as they petitioned us to delist, not downlist the species. Outreach plans include a regional news release and Congressional notifications. (04/25/2018)

As early as June, FWS in partnership with Arizona Game and Fish Department will propose expanding the black-footed ferret 10(j) designation to include all current and historical ferret habitat in Arizona. The 1996 Arizona 10(j) area was limited to the Aubrey Valley Experimental Population Area (AVEPA); successful reintroductions and subsequent population expansions has resulted in ferrets venturing outside of the AVEPA (as fully protected status). FWS consultation with affected tribes has been initiated. FWS will coordinate with AGFD to best approach and inform Arizona grassland residents and industry (livestock) groups. Communication planning will be conducted. (04/18/2018)

In June, pending approval by the Department, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a Notice of Intent to prepare a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) addressing the potential impacts from four similar wind energy project habitat conservation plans in Hawaii. The HCPs were submitted to the Service in support of requests for permits authorizing the take of endangered or threatened species, under the Endangered Species Act. Due to similarities in the geography, impact, covered species, and proposed mitigation measures between these four wind energy projects the Service has determined that a combined PEIS is the most efficient and comprehensive approach for considering the cumulative impacts of these actions on the human environment. When the PEIS publishes, outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, with targeted stakeholder outreach. (Updated 04/11/2018)

#### National Park Service

By May 15, pending Departmental approval, the NPS will publish a Federal Register notice announcing that the Department has authorized the preparation of a World Heritage nomination for the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio. It is recirculating for surname. With nine component properties including those that form Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, and others managed by the State of Ohio, this series of geometric mounds is approximately 2,000

years old. The nomination file, which will take more than a year to draft, will be developed by local proponents in Ohio with guidance from the NPS. Upon completion and review, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks will determine whether the nomination will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee. (Updated 04/18/18).

**[UPDATE]** By May 15, Olympic National Park's 2017 Natural Resource Condition Assessment will be published as a National Park Service Resource Report. This report is jointly funded by the USGS and the NPS. A joint NPS-USGS news release will be issued announcing the report. (Updated 04/25/18)

On May 15, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore expects to host public meetings and online engagement related to uses and crowding at the most heavily visited portions of the park. This public input will be used to guide the development of a visitor use management plan for the park. (03/27/18)

On May 15, Rock Creek Park will issue a prospectus and begin accepting proposals from vendors to provide equestrian and related services at the park's horse center in Washington D.C. under a new 10-year concession contract. Services sought include private horse boarding, therapeutic riding programs, instructional camps, guided trail rides and riding lessons. Contract offers must be received by June 15. (04/11/18).

On May 15-16, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council will hold a public meeting in Jamestown, Virginia. This will be the Council's final meeting since trail advisory councils are only authorized for 10 years under the National Trails System Act. Deputy Director Dan Smith plans to attend the first day. (04/12/18)

**[UPDATE]** By May 18, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) expects to issue the Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Muir Woods National Monument Salmon Habitat Enhancement and Bridge Replacement Project. The selected alternative will restore aquatic habitat degraded by riprap that was placed along the creek banks in the 1930s and replace four deteriorated pedestrian bridges that were installed in the 1990s. The project implements part of the 2014 General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. The projects themselves are not expected to be controversial, but there is public interest in ensuring that NPS schedules its projects to reduce cumulative impacts from planned construction work in the area by the Marin County Department of Public Works and the Federal Highways Works Administration. (Updated 04/25/18)

By May 20, National Capital Parks-East, via the Federal Highway Administration, will award a contract to repair the roads in Fort Dupont and Fort Davis Parks. This paving project will completely reconstruct the most deteriorated sections and resurface the roads. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton has been interested in the project. Public notifications will begin in the coming weeks and work is expected to begin in summer 2018. (04/04/18).

**[NEW]** On May 21, Mount Rainier National Park will issue a news release announcing the availability of the Paradise Cellular Environmental Assessment (EA) Finding of No Significant Impact. The selected action will issue right-of-way permits to Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile,

and provide conditional approval of AT&T's proposal to co-locate wireless communication facilities in the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise. The cellular facilities will be concealed in the attic of the visitor center and will not involve the construction of towers. The NPS received 893 comments on the EA, with approximately 70% opposed to the service. Comments opposed to the proposal emphasized the protection of national parks and wildernesses from wireless signals, with many assuming a cell tower would be constructed. Those in favor emphasized safety, and the benefits of improved communication including convenience, coordination, education, and timely notification of hazards. The NPS determined that cellular service at Paradise will benefit the public by improving communication between the NPS and the public, and between park visitors, in the most intensely used and developed district of the park. (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 23, the public comment period will close on Antietam National Battlefield's Visitor Access and Circulation Plan/Environmental Assessment (Plan/EA). The purpose of the Plan/EA is to evaluate the implementation of strategies to improve visitor access and circulation at the park. This Plan/EA also serves as an amendment to the 1992 Antietam National Battlefield General Management Plan, taking into account newly acquired lands not previously considered in the general management plan and evolving management decisions regarding the visitor center and several Battlefield tour roads. <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ANTICirculationPlan> (Updated 04/25/2018)

**[UPDATED]** On May 29, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a competitive business opportunity to establish a waterfront community center at the Fort Baker Historic Boat Shop and Marina as an affordable recreational and gathering place. The purpose of the RFQ is to identify both private- and public-sector entities interested in operating the facility, which is currently operated by the U.S. Air Force as a military recreation facility open to the public. The NPS is seeking a long-term lease that will enable an offeror to make necessary investments in historic rehabilitation of deteriorating facilities, and the provision of public services and programs at the site. The park has kept the USAF informed throughout the lead up to this announcement, and they have express interest in participating in the RFQ process. (Updated 04/25/18).

**[NEW]** On or after May 29, the NPS will release the Tule Lake Unit of World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the public. The FWS co-manages two of three parcels that comprise the Tule Lake Unit, and the FWS has concurred with issuing the FONSI. The selected action outlines the long-term management and development for the unit established in May 2008 by President Bush. (04/25/2018)

On May 30, it is anticipated that Independence National Historical Park will hold the kick-off meeting for the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission. Meeting participants will officially begin planning programs and activities commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. The Commission has many representatives from various organizations and corporations. Eight members of Congress serve on the Commission. (04/11/18).

By May 30, USDA APHIS will complete data analysis that will inform a schedule for bison transfer to the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Ft. Peck, Montana. On April 5, Yellowstone

National Park and the Deputy Administrator of USDA APHIS discussed several key issues related to the park's proposed bison quarantine program. This was follow-up to a February 2018 meeting, convened and facilitated by the Secretary of the Interior, between DOI, NPS, USDA APHIS, Ft. Peck tribal leadership, and the State of Montana. Substantive progress was confirmed on several issues including the structure and signators for agreements on quarantine facility operations, the future transfer of brucellosis-free bison to the Ft. Peck reservation, and USDA APHIS certification of the park bison quarantine facility. Yellowstone bison management and quarantine receive national public interest and media coverage. (Updated 04/18/18)

By May 31, the NPS intends to award multiple concession contracts for mountaineering guide services at Denali National Park and Preserve. Applicant submissions have been scored and rated. The selection process is currently in the matching phase where, one by one, prospective concessioners with ANILCA preferences have an opportunity to match the best offer. New contracts will have a term of 10 years, beginning January 1, 2019. (Updated 03/27/18).

Between June 1-15, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (pending Departmental approval of NOA) expects to issue a Record of Decision for the Vista Grande Drainage Basin Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report /Environmental Impact Statement prepared in cooperation with the City of Daly City, California. This project would allow Daly City to take project actions at Fort Funston to address storm-related flooding in the Vista Grande Drainage Basin. [PEPC link](#) (04/04/18).

On June 2, construction crews will begin temporary stabilization repairs on Arlington Memorial Bridge. The project start was delayed to accommodate the Rolling Thunder special event over Memorial Day weekend. This repair work is designed to keep the bridge open to traffic during its full rehabilitation (beginning in fall 2018). Work crews will repair bridge deck supports in the drawbridge span and the road deck in the westbound roadway. This work will require intermittent single lane closures on the bridge beginning after Memorial Day weekend. (Updated 04/11/18).

On June 14, the U.S. Mint will release the America the Beautiful Quarters Program coin honoring Voyageurs National Park. A ceremony will be held in International Falls, Minnesota. (04/04/18).

On June 15, Yosemite National Park's Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias will reopen to the public, following a 3-year \$40 million project funded through the NPS and Yosemite Conservancy matching funds. A new parking lot and welcome center has been constructed at the South Entrance, a shuttle bus will take visitors to the big trees, a handicap accessible boardwalk has been constructed, trails have been improved, and new restrooms have been installed. The dedication ceremony to mark the completion of the project is slated for June 14. <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/mariposagrove.htm> (03/07/18)

Expected to last through June or the end of the dry season, Burnett Oil Company will continue seismic operation within Big Cypress National Preserve. The Nobles Grade 3D Seismic Survey, a proposal that the National Park Service and Burnett examined and refined for more than two

years before it was approved in May 2016, originally began in March of 2017 and suspended operations by June 2, 2017, when conditions became too wet to continue. Burnett is using a vibroseis technique to acquire geologic data to assess the potential for oil drilling within Big Cypress National Preserve. It is expected the exploration will continue this year through the south Florida dry season which should end by June 2018. Work began on March 29. (Updated 04/11/18).

July 3 is the deadline for the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to submit a nomination to the Keeper of the Ch'u'itnu Historic District Traditional Cultural Property nomination submitted by the Native Village of Tyonek (NVT). On April 4, 2018, the Alaska Historical Commission (Commission) approved the nomination submitted by the NVT, a federally recognized tribe that has lived within the proposed district for many generations. The District encompasses ca. 109,000 acres of land within Alaska's Ch'u'itnu River watershed approximately 90 miles west of Anchorage. The nomination is opposed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources as well as some private organizations/commercial entities. An accord can only be submitted to the Keeper by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and only after it has been reviewed by the Alaska Historical Commission. It is the Keeper's understanding that despite approval of the nomination by the Commission, the SHPO remains strongly opposed to it. Failure of the SHPO to meet the 90 day/ July 3 deadline will likely result in the filing of a third appeal by NVT directly to the Keeper to review the nomination and list the property in the NR. (04/18/18)

Between July 19-31, the American Indian Movement (AIM) will hold its 27th annual Sundance at Pipestone National Monument. The Sundance is the central sacred ceremony for the Lakota Tribes. On April 2, the NPS received a proposal from AIM to improve the grounds used for the Sundance. The NPS will begin working through the compliance process for the proposed improvements and has introduced possible alternatives to meet AIM's needs. (Updated 04/11/18).

By August 2018, the NPS and the National Park Foundation (NPF) will complete their joint Impact Investment Study. The Impact Investing Study is being funded by the NPF and will analyze how federal agencies have developed third-party financed infrastructure construction, operations, revitalization, and recapitalization programs over the past 20 years. The study will also identify potential new or modified authorities or policies required to implement alternative financing strategies to help the NPS move forward with the construction, repair, and ongoing maintenance of bureau infrastructure. (03/14/18).

## **Awareness**

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**[UPDATE]** The comment period for the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed development of the Crocker Wind Farm in Clark County, South Dakota, was due to close on April 24. A private citizen requested an extension to the comment period based on the fact that he is waiting to hear the results of a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request that was filed. A response to his FOIA request will be available on April 24. A two-week extension

until May 8 was granted to provide him the opportunity to review the results before providing comments on the draft EA. Geronimo Energy, the developers for the Crocker Wind Farm, is interested in expeditiously moving the process along, however tribal consultation will not take place until mid-May. This extension would not delay the process. FWS is preparing outreach material to make the public aware of this extension. FWS will contact both the extension requester and Geronimo Energy. (04/25/2018)

**[NEW]** During the weekend of April 14-15, record rainfall on Kauai, Hawaii, caused the Hanalei River to flood, covering most of the Hanalei NWR. The river may have permanently changed course, compromising the source of water for refuge management and taro farming. All refuge staff and resident permittees have now evacuated and are safe. Damage to all government-owned facilities, vehicles and equipment is being assessed by refuge staff as floodwaters recede. In addition, there is significant damage to personal property owned by permittees, and the state and county. (04/25/2018)

**[NEW]** On April 13, the California Department of Water Resources informed the FWS that it is no longer pursuing the evaluation of a staged construction concept for the California WaterFix project. Their decision is based on a vote last week by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to support the full project and more than double their funding commitment for the project. FWS signed a biological opinion for California WaterFix project addressing 16 listed species, including Delta smelt, in June 2017. FWS is awaiting additional details from the California Department of Water Resources regarding project footprint refinements and whether additional documentation regarding the consultation is necessary. (04/25/2018)

**[NEW]** The peer-reviewed journal, *Biological Conservation*, will publish an article about Blanding's turtles in June titled *Slow and steady wins the race? Future climate and land use change leaves the imperiled Blanding's turtle (Emydoidea blandingii) behind*. The article is co-authored by researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Michigan State University, U.S. Geological Survey and FWS. The listing status for Blanding's turtles is currently under review by Ecological Services, with a 12-month finding due in FY 23. (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On February 6, the FWS Region 6 Migratory Birds issued a bald eagle incidental take permit issued to Garrett Construction Company, LLC (Garrett). On February 13, Front Range Nesting Bald Eagles Studies filed a Petition for Review of Agency Action, challenging certain actions associated with FWS' issuance of the Garrett permit and alleging that those actions violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act. On April 2, Department of Justice, on behalf of FWS, filed a Motion for Voluntary Remand and Stay of Briefing, requesting that the court allow FWS to reconsider the Garrett permit based on new information it had received. On April 17, FWS informed the court that it has decided to undertake additional analyses regarding the Garrett permit, including conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) of potential impacts of issuing a bald eagle incidental take permit to Garrett. The FWS will suspend the February 6, 2018 Garrett permit while conducting the EA and receiving public comment. After the FWS has made a final permit determination, the parties will confer regarding either the dismissal of the lawsuit or a schedule for any future litigation. (04/25/2018)



**[UPDATE]** FWS has been informed that the Illinois Governor's Office is engaged in discussion with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) over its preferred alternative to update the Brandon Road Lock and Dam in the Illinois Waterway to allow for new tools to be deployed in the fight against Asian carp entering the Great Lakes. At the request of USACE, FWS will develop a Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act report to assess project alternatives. This report includes coordination with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and USACE and is due in mid-May. This issue may be elevated to political levels quickly. (Updated on 04/18/2018.)

**[UPDATE]** Ash Meadows NWR in southwest Nevada has been subject to litigation by Victor Fuentes, pastor of Ministerio Solida Church Camp since 2012. Fuentes owns a 40-acre private inholding within the boundary of the refuge. Recently there has been increasing activity on social media focusing on the Church Camp as a location for a gathering to oppose the federal government, in general, and Ash Meadows, in particular. A gathering at the camp took place on April 20-21. Approximately 50 people were in attendance. Ryan Bundy, candidate for governor, was the keynote speaker, and during his remarks, offered to dismantle FWS's water diversion. Prior to the meeting FWS staff took pre-emptive measures to make certain that volunteers and documents were safe. All important documents, including PPI, were moved to the office in Las Vegas and will remain there. Several people who attended the meeting had been spotted in the visitor center from time to time, but they did not cause trouble. The meeting occurred with no impact to the refuge or its operations; in fact, the refuge received about 100 visitors on Saturday. (Updated 04/25/2018)

### National Park Service

On April 25, NPS/DOI issued a news release announcing the latest annual report conducted by the NPS on the the economic impact of visitation to national parks. Visitor spending in communities near national parks in 2017 resulted in a \$35.8 billion benefit to the nation's economy and supported 306,000 jobs. The release was timed to coincide with National Park Week. (04/25/18)

**[NEW]** Between May 21 - 25 The National Center for Preservation, Technology and Training (NCPTT) will host a workshop Current Archaeological Prospection: Advances for Non-destructive Investigations of the Marksville, Louisiana, site. This workshop is dedicated to the use of geophysical, aerial photography, and other remote sensing technologies as they apply to the identification, evaluation, conservation, and protection of archaeological resources across this Nation. The workshop will present lectures on the theory of operation, methodology, processing, and interpretation with on-hands use of the equipment in the field. The Marksville site, a local variant of the Hopewell Tradition, contains numerous prehistoric earthworks. Co-sponsors for the workshop include the Marksville State Historic Site, the Office of Cultural Development, Division of Archaeology, and the Friends of NCPTT. <https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/events/2018-current-archeological-prospection/> (04/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Media attention and pre-construction activities are ramping-up for the Mountain Valley Pipeline, which will cross the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Several protests are ongoing on private or other non-NPS lands. Specific construction dates are not yet set, but could begin as early as May or June on USFS lands (adjacent to

Appalachian National Scenic Trail) and NPS lands (Blue Ridge Parkway). Media attention is not focused on the NPS at this time. The NPS Washington Office of Communications has the lead for any media inquiries. (Updated 4/25/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (PDAS) John Tahsuda will be in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to meet with the Five Civilized Tribes on April 30, in the office May 1-2, and in Artesia, New Mexico, for the Law Enforcement Officer’s Ceremony on May 3.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Director Bryan Rice will be in the office this week.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Director Tony Dearman will be on travel to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to kick off the Strategic Management Plan Team meetings that begin on May 1; then will travel to Salem, Oregon, on May 2 for a tour of the Chemawa Indian School with members of the Oregon Congressional delegation. From there he will travel to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management George Bearpaw will be in the office this week.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

An application to acquire approximately 48 acres in trust for gaming purposes for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma is pending with the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs. A final decision on the Nation’s application is expected near the end of April or in early May. The site, known as the Fountainhead Site, is located within the Nation’s former reservation boundaries, and was originally part of allotments made to members of the Creek Nation. The Nation has the support of the Governor and the local governments. Senators Inhofe and Lankford are not opposed.

On April 30, PDAS Tahsuda will be meeting with the Five Civilized Tribes in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

On May 3, PDAS Tahsuda plans to attend the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Indian Law Enforcement Officer’s Ceremony at the United States Indian Police Academy Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Artesia, New Mexico.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

On May 2-4, the BIA Office of Indian Services, Division of Transportation, will hold the quarterly Tribal Transportation Program Coordinating Committee (TTPCC) meeting in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The TTPCC was established by federal regulations (25 CFR 170.135) to provide input and recommendations to the BIA and Federal Highway Administration concerning the Tribal Transportation Program.

## Bureau of Indian Education

**[UPDATED]** On May 3, BIE Director Dearman, BIE Deputy Director – Operations Stevens, and staff will conduct a site visit at the Chemewa Indian School with the Oregon Congressional delegation (Rep. Schrader, Rep. Bonamaci, Sen. Wyden, and Sen. Merkley) to speak with the Superintendent and Vice Principal.

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

### Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

On May 18, PDAS Tahsuda will be the keynote speaker at the Haskell Indian Nations University 2018 commencement in Lawrence, Kansas.

May 23-24 will be the Tribal-Interior Budget Council (TIBC) meeting at the Washington Plaza Hotel in Washington, DC.

**[UPDATED]** May 31 is the tentative date for a Tribal consultation in Rapid City, South Dakota, on potential revisions to the fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR Part 151. A Dear Tribal Leader letter is expected to be ready for distribution in the next week.

June 3-6, PDAS Tahsuda is planning on hosting one or more listening sessions or Tribal consultations at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) will host its mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

### Bureau of Indian Affairs

May 7 is the deadline for written comments on the BIA's request for comments on its categorical exclusions (CATEXs) under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), per the Federal Register notice published on March 6.

## Bureau of Indian Education

**[NEW]** April 30 – May 4, BIE will hold a strategic planning meeting for goals 1 through 3 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. There will be 77 participants. BIE Director Dearman will attend the first day's session.

May 14 - 18, BIE will host a Strategic Management Plan Face-to-Face meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to address Goals 4-6.

May 16 -18, the BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children will meet in Choctaw, Mississippi.

May 21-25, BIE will host a strategic planning meeting on Goals 4 through 6 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

May 22-23, a SIPI Engineering faculty member will attend a NASA-NSF-NIFA Symposium in Washington, DC.

On May 25, SIPI will conduct focus groups of current students to determine the impact of online and evening/weekend course offerings on student enrollment patterns. This will provide the basis for a market study to determine the feasibility of future online and evening/weekend college.

May 30-June 2, SIPI's IC-Mars project lead and four students will attend the TECHLAV Annual Meeting in North Carolina University AT&T in Greensboro, North Carolina.

## **Awareness**

### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

**[NEW]** April 30-May 4, Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) staff engineers and data technicians will be meeting in Cloquet, Minnesota, with Midwest Region Tribes conducting six active grant projects, most of which are focused on biomass heating opportunities and security biomass feedstock.

**[UPDATED]** DOI Reorganization - Indian Affairs staff are working with PDAS to identify dates in June through August and approximately eight locations for Tribal consultations on the DOI Reorganization. The plan is to kick off the consultation series with a listening session at the NCAI meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, the week of June 4. A Dear Tribal Leader letter will announce all the dates and locations.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs marked up and passed out of Committee, S. 2515, the PROGRESS Act, amending Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act for Self Determination and Self Governance to provide Tribes with greater flexibility to efficiently tailor, consolidate and administer federal programs for their communities.

### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

**[NEW]** On April 4, BIA Pacific Region's Water Rights Specialist received a Recognition Award from the California Department of Water Resources for leadership and innovation that supports improved policy development, environmental protection, human rights to water, and cultural use of water. The award was presented at the 2018 California Tribal Water Summit.

**[UPDATED]** The Federal Register notice providing the 2018 list of Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Designated Agents List is with Exec Sec and awaiting approval to publish in the Federal Register. ICWA requires State courts and child welfare agencies to provide a notice to Indian tribes whenever an Indian child (as defined in the Act) is involved in a child custody proceeding. The Federal Register notice lists the agents that each Tribe has designated to receive that notice.

**[UPDATED]** June 3 is the deadline for issuance of final BIA guidance for Tribes on how to conduct background checks of foster care parents and employees under the Native American

Children's Safety Act (NACSA). BIA is currently collecting additional edits from HHS and DOJ and anticipates having the final guidance ready for signature by May 4.

June 30 is the deadline for written comments on whether and how to revise BIA's fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR 151, per the Dear Tribal Leader letter dated February 15, 2018.

**[UPDATED]** Fee-to-Trust Off-Reservation Applications: There are a total of 17 off-reservation FTT applications under review. Three are with Exec Sec pending final approval: Saginaw Chippewa, Confederate Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw, and Wilton Rancheria. The remaining 14 applications are pending review.

**[UPDATED]** Fee-to-Trust Completed Cases: For the time period of April 6 to April 16, 2018, BIA completed three land acquisition cases, taking a total of 0.785 acres into trust for the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. To date for calendar year 2018, 15 cases have been completed totaling approximately 3,320 acres. Since 2009, a total of approximately 657,296 acres have been conveyed into trust.

Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership (HEARTH) Act - A total of 43 leasing regulations, submitted by 39 tribal nations, have been approved under the HEARTH Act. A total of eight leasing regulations were published in the Federal Register on Mar. 28, 2018. The following is the total of 25 leasing regulations in various stages of review or awaiting approval: 2 tribal leasing regulations submitted to the Federal Register for publication; 4 tribal leasing regulations in various stages of the review and approval process; 1 tribal leasing regulations in final review with DRES; 1 in final review with the region; 14 within the in-house review process and 3 with tribal governments for modifications.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

**[NEW]** May 17 is the deadline for comments and nominations in response to Federal Register notice published on April 17 on the Bureau of Indian Education Standards, Assessments, and Accountability System Negotiated Rulemaking Committee Establishment; Proposed Membership.

**[UPDATED]** May 21 is the deadline for comments on the Bureau of Indian Affairs' proposed rule updating the regulation regarding when Indian students are eligible for benefits of education under the Johnson-O'Malley Act (JOM), per the Federal Register notice published on March 21, 2018. PDAS Tahsuda and BIE Director Dearman consulted with Navajo Nation at their request on April 25.

**[NEW]** The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) team won second place in the 2018 NASA Swarmathon, a national competition to develop cooperative robotics to revolutionize space exploration. This is the third year in a row the team has competed and won – bronze in 2016, gold in 2017, and silver in 2018.

### **ASSISTANT SECRETARY INSULAR AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

#### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

## Insular Affairs

**US Government Begins Discussions with Palau on Compact Funding:** On May 1, OIA Budget Director and staff will be in Palau for initial discussions with Palau on recently approved Compact funding. On March 23, President Trump signed the 2018 Omnibus Funding Agreement that included \$123 million for funding to Palau through 2024. The long-awaited funding had been agreed to by the U.S. and Palau under the 2010 Palau Compact Review Agreement. The goal is to make any necessary and appropriate adjustments within the Agreement as soon as possible to begin the flow of funds.

**FY2018 Grant Funding Application Review:** Beginning in May, OIA will be reviewing grant applications under the Technical Assistance program for FY2018 funding.

## International Affairs

**Counter Wildlife Trafficking and Wildlife Conservation in Meso America:** On May 1-5, Christina Kish, DOI-ITAP Project Manager, will travel to Panama to present lessons learned, best practices, accomplishments, and technical experience regarding combating wildlife trafficking to a gathering of regional wildlife conservation professionals. Ms. Kish will also meet with the Prosecutor General of Panama and Panama's Chief of Environmental Police to plan and coordinate upcoming DOI-ITAP organized workshops, meetings, and activities in and with the Government of Panama. This travel is conducted in support of the February 2017 Presidential Executive Order on Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking, and is funded by the State Department.

**International Offshore Petroleum Environment Regulators Meeting:** DOI-ITAP will support the participation of two Argentine energy officials at the International Offshore Petroleum Environment Regulators Annual General Meeting in Houston, Texas, May 3-4. Representatives from BOEM will be leading the U.S. delegation. This work is funded by the State Department.

**NAFTA 2.0: [UPDATE]** In the aftermath of negotiations held April 9-14, INT Policy Division staff continue to coordinate DOI input into interagency review of negotiating positions, including environmental, water and indigenous issues relevant for DOI, under the direction of the Deputy Secretary and ASIIA.

## Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

**2018 Our Ocean Conference:** On May 1, the USG Interagency Planning Team for the fifth Our Ocean Conference will meet at the State Department. The Ocean, Great Lakes, and Coastal Program Coordinator will attend on behalf of DOI. Indonesia will host the conference in Bali, October 29th-30th. The theme of this year's conference is "Our Ocean, Our Legacy," and the focus will be on major international commitments to protect, conserve, and understand the ocean. (Washington, DC - DOS; no press)

**DOI Senior Ocean Policy Team and Regional Ocean Contacts Meeting:** On May 2, the DOI Senior Ocean Policy Team and the Regional Ocean Contacts will meet jointly to discuss ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal deliverables in support of the Administration's priorities, DOI presence at Capitol Hill Ocean Week and the Our Ocean Conference, and other bureau ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal initiatives.  
(Washington, DC - DOI; no press)

**American Samoa U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Planning Team Meeting:** On May 4, the Planning Team for the 40<sup>th</sup> U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting will meet to discuss the agenda, theme, logistics, side meetings, workshops, and site visits. The 40<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held in Pago Pago, American Samoa.  
(American Samoa – conference call; no press)

### Hurricane Recovery

No updates to report.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### International Affairs

**MOU with Israel on Biodiversity Conservation, Protected Areas, and Cultural and Historical Heritage:** *[UPDATE]* Israel's Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) Director General has further postponed his visit to the U.S., potentially this fall, at which time he hopes to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretary or his designee. INPA is contemplating a visit in the fall and will reach out with details as their planning advances. The MOU is intended to strengthen cooperation on biodiversity conservation, protected areas, and cultural and historical heritage. Decisions will need to be made about whether to host an event at DOI or at the Israeli Embassy, as well as regarding whether and what type of press or other public announcements should be made in conjunction with the signing. INT expects to share the latest draft of the MOU with DOI senior leadership shortly.

**Kenya Wildlife Service USFWS Forensic Lab Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is supporting a technical exchange May 8-11 between the Kenya Wildlife Service and the USFWS Forensic Lab in Ashland, Oregon. This exchange will serve as an opportunity to share lessons learned and promote a train the trainer model to spread the learning to additional counterparts when participants return to their home country. This is the second exchange between these two entities. This work is funded by USAID.

**Northern Rangelands Trust Law Enforcement Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is coordinating a technical exchange May 12-June 1 between two law enforcement officers from the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) and Yellowstone National Park. The NRT officers will be joining National Park staff during the seasonal law enforcement officers training. This exchange will provide field training on interoperability and law enforcement coordination. This work is funded by USAID.

## **Press Releases Planned for the Following:**

- None Planned.

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

### **Insular Affairs**

#### **U.S. Interagency Meeting on U.S. National Security Interests in the FAS and Territories:**

On June 8, the State Department and DOI will co-host a U.S.-only interagency dialogue to secure the future U.S. presence in Micronesia to include 1) a session on the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, which builds upon the work of the USG Interagency Working Group on the Freely Associated States and aims to secure U.S. interests beyond 2023; and 2) a session on U.S. territories: Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The dialogue will be held at the SBU/FOUO level.

**White House Visit for the Freely Associated States:** Summer 2018 – The State Department is supportive of a request from the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for a working meeting at the White House for the Presidents of the three freely associated states: Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. This idea was raised by Secretary Zinke to FSM President Peter Christian when he visited Interior in 2017.

### **Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts**

**World Oceans Day and Capitol Hill Ocean Week:** World Oceans Day is June 8 and Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) will be held June 5-7. The Ocean, Great Lakes, and Coastal Program Coordinator, along with the DOI Senior Ocean Policy Team, are coordinating the Department's participation in CHOW, which is hosted annually by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. June has also historically been proclaimed as National Oceans Month, including by President Trump in 2017. Two new issues of the DOI NEWSWAVE newsletter are expected to be released in June for these events.

### **Awareness**

#### **International Affairs**

**Iceland Secretarial Meeting Request and Whaling Activities: [UPDATE]** The Embassy of Iceland seeks a meeting with the Secretary to petition for decertification under the Pelly Amendment. This could lead to changes in their diplomatic status associated with Iceland's whaling activities (DOI certified in 2014 that Iceland was diminishing the effectiveness of CITES due to the conduct of trade in whale meat by Icelandic nationals). INT has put DOI Scheduling in touch with a contact at the Icelandic Embassy, and Scheduling is considering dates in mid-May. INT is coordinating with FWS, which as the lead for Pelly will provide lead support for the meeting, and is facilitating coordination with the State Department as well.



**Vietnamese Minister Meeting with Secretary and MOU Signing:** The Vietnamese Minister of Public Security Tô Lâm has postponed his trip to Washington, DC until a date to be determined, likely late June or early July. The Vietnamese government has expressed interest in the Minister meeting with the Secretary to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen U.S. – Vietnam cooperation to combat wildlife trafficking. The Ministry of Public Security is the government ministry responsible for managing Vietnam’s police and public security forces, which play a key role in wildlife law enforcement. INT continues to work with FWS Office of Law Enforcement and the State Department to finalize the MOU with Vietnam.

**Comments to GAO on Trafficking and Repatriation of Tribal Cultural Heritage:** During the week of March 26, the INT Policy Division provided comments to GAO on their initial factual findings in a study of the trafficking of tribal cultural items by foreign auction houses and Federal efforts to help tribes repatriate sacred objects and other cultural items. This followed up on a previously reported March 21 phone call with GAO on this topic. The GAO expects to produce a draft of its report in late April or early May.

**Assistance to Tribes Seeking Repatriation from Abroad:** *[UPDATE]* Another Paris auction was held on March 29 by the Millon auction house. Tribes requested assistance from DOI and the Departments of State and Justice to forestall sale of one Hopi item and one Iroquois item, both considered sacred objects which could only have left tribal hands in violation of customary law. In the absence, however, of specific evidence of illegality, the items were sold. The Hopi Tribe sent a letter to Secretary Zinke. Exec Sec has routed the letter to INT Policy Division which is developing a response.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

ASLM Joe Balash will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kate MacGregor will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Casey Hammond will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BSEE Director Scott Angelle will attend the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston, TX from April 30 to May 4.

BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will attend the Sage Grouse Scoping meeting in Cheyenne, WY from Mat 1-2.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Bureau of Land Management**

**April 2 – 27.** BLM-MT/DK. The Montana/Dakotas State Office is working with several agencies to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning rangeland monitoring.

The MOU will increase cooperation among the parties and provide a framework for landowners / permittees / lessees to collect data on grazing lands using methods collectively agreed upon by the parties. Other parties include Montana Rangelands Partnership, a program coordinated by the Montana Department of Natural Resources Rangeland Resources Program; Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation; Division of Trust Lands Management; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, the U.S. Forest Service; and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service / Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. The MOU will help restore trust with local communities and improve dialogue and relationships. (3/23/18)

**[UPDATED] April 15 – 30.** BLM-AK prepared a *Federal Register* Notice providing constructive notice of a decision approving 424.35 acres for conveyance to Sivuqaq, Inc., and Kukulget, Inc., for the Native villages of Gambell and Savoonga on the former St. Lawrence Island Reindeer Reserve. This is a non-discretionary action in accordance with Sec. 19(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), and the native corporations will receive title to the surface and subsurface estates. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C.

**April 16 – 30.** BLM-CA intends to renew the site license for Calpine's Sonoma Power Plant, which is located at The Geysers geothermal area in Sonoma County. The 30-year license required for operations has expired. The Ukiah Field Office posted an unsigned Categorical Exclusion (CX) for public review on ePlanning on Jan. 24 and the CX was signed Feb. 1. Once the proponent signs the license, BLM-CA will finalize the process and issue the site license. (3/16/18)

**[UPDATED] April 16 – May 14.** BLM-AK. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to release the Donlin Gold Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by late April. Current Record of Decision (ROD) timelines include August 2018 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and September 2018 for the BLM, with the BLM Anchorage Field Manager as the anticipated authorized officer. The BLM has submitted the final consistency review of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Section 810 analysis to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is an appendix to the Final EIS. BLM-Alaska is in discussions with Donlin Gold, LLC, and the Alaska State Pipeline Coordination Section on specific stream crossing stipulations and other draft stipulations to be included in the mixed-lands jurisdiction natural gas pipeline right-of-way grant. On May 14, BLM-Alaska will participate in the final review of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Programmatic Agreement, which will be an appendix to the Record of Decision. Donlin Gold LLC applied for permits for an open-pit, hardrock gold mine in southwest Alaska. The mine site will also include waste treatment and waste rock facilities, a mill facility and a natural gas-powered power plant. BLM-AK has been participating as a cooperating agency on the project and is responsible for a right-of-way (ROW) authorization. Donlin Gold applied for a ROW on one-third of the 316-mile proposed natural gas pipeline. The ROW would cross approximately 92 miles and 4,322 acres of largely remote and undisturbed BLM-managed public lands. The affected public lands are under a 1981 Management Framework Plan and the area is also included in the Bering Sea/Western Interior Resource Management Plan, currently under development. <http://www.DonlinGoldEIS.com>. (3/1/18)

**April 30.** BLM-ID. On April 30, the Bruneau Field Manager will issue two of three proposed grazing decisions, which renew grazing permits, restore riparian areas, protect cultural resources, and incorporate range improvement projects across 187,537 acres of BLM-administered lands.

The project area lies entirely within a Sagebrush Focal Area and Priority Habitat Management Area, and contains wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was released on August 30, 2017, for public review, and the Field Manager has been meeting with permittees, state and federal agencies, and other interested publics to address concerns and comments provided in the EA prior to issuing decisions. (2/7/18)

**April 30.** BLM-NV. The Tonopah Field Office is proposing a non-competitive (direct) sale of 221.68 acres of public land to Esmeralda County to resolve inadvertent unauthorized occupancy issues within the historic mining townsite of Gold Point., Nev. The parcel would be sold at the appraised fair market value (FMV). The BLM will open a 45-day public comment period on the sale, with an aim to publish the Federal Register notice by April 30, 2018. The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. The Federal Register package is currently under review in the Washington Office. (4/11/18) DTS 2015

**April 30.** BLM-NV. A Federal Register notice is scheduled to post on segregation for potential withdrawal of a 361-acre area of public lands surrounding the Central Nevada Test Area UC-1 Site, which was the location of an underground nuclear test commonly known as Project Faultless. The Department of Energy is requesting the withdrawal to ensure that residual subsurface contamination is not disturbed. Publication of the notice will open a 90-day public comment period and immediately segregate the land for up to two years from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining and mineral leasing laws, subject to valid existing rights. The two-year segregation will provide the BLM and the DOE sufficient time to conduct an Environmental Assessment of the requested withdrawal and any alternatives, in order for the BLM to make a recommendation to the Interior Secretary on the requested withdrawal. Following such evaluation, as well as consideration of public comments received, the Secretary may issue a Public Land Order withdrawing the land for 20 years. (4/11/18)

**April 30.** BLM-NM. The public comment period ends for the Talavera Substation and Distribution Project Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), which was released by the Las Cruces District on March 26, 2018. The EA analyzes potential environmental effects from the construction, operation, and maintenance of a proposed new, permanent El Paso Electric substation and associated transmission, and 10.4 miles of distribution lines in Doña Ana County. The EA was prepared in response to right-of-way (ROW) applications submitted by El Paso Electric on October 19, 2016. The proposed ROWs are on BLM-managed public lands and will support the increasing need for energy in the City of Las Cruces and surrounding southern New Mexico communities. Public scoping for the EA began on July 17, 2017 and ended on August 17, 2017. The Las Cruces District hosted a public meeting on April 5, 2018 at the Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum in Las Cruces. A news release announcing the public meeting and start of the comment period was distributed on March 26, 2018. (3/16/18)

**April 30.** BLM-OR/WA. Prineville District BLM will publish the T16S R18E S8 Resolution Environmental Assessment (EA) on ePlanning and will issue a media release notifying the public that this EA is available for public comment. The purpose of the EA is to resolve a structural trespass on BLM managed public land about 20 miles southeast of Prineville. The case involves a house, outbuildings, buried water pipeline, and several other improvements that were developed on the land over 20 years ago. The landowner at the time believed the land to be private. Two roads crossing public lands may need rights-of-way assigned to them as they are being used to access the structures. The Bend Bulletin editorial board to date has published three editorials about this trespass resolution process accusing the BLM of concealing information,

showing “...contempt for the public’s right to know what’s going on”, and mismanaging public lands. It is unknown if release of this EA will generate additional interest. (4/11/18)

**[NEW] Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Green Plant Exploratory excavation Project Environmental Assessment. Green Planet's Plan of Operation is to excavate and process 400 yd<sup>3</sup> of placer material from a fenced site, approximately 220 feet by 75 feet (total work area), situated on the St. Philips placer claim on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Mohave Ground Squirrel Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates publishing a draft Environmental Assessment for the Keystone Exploratory Drilling Project, located on existing un-patented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The Park Service is a cooperating agency on the joint document. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] Early May.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates a Decision for the Perdito Exploratory Drilling Project Environmental Assessment. The Perdito Exploration Project is located on existing un-patented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project area is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 1 - 8.** BLM-WY. The Lander Field Office expects to initiate a 30-day public scoping period for a wild horse gather in the North Lander Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA) Complex. The North Lander Complex is located in central Wyoming and is made up of the Conant Creek, Dishpan Butte, Muskrat Basin and Rock Creek Mountain HMAs. The current appropriate management level (AML) for the Complex is 320-536 mature horses; the current estimated population of the complex is 1,134 horses. The proposed gather would facilitate population control measures and removals of wild horses to bring the complex population down to the AML and keep it within the low and high AML range. The North Lander Complex gather is not on the national gather schedule. The intention of the Lander Field Office is to have the NEPA completed should gather opportunities become available. Due to the inherent controversy associated with wild horse gathers, there will be public and media interest in this scoping period. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 1.** BLM-UT. The Price Field Office will release for public review and comment an Environmental Assessment analyzing two coal lease modification proposals. Canyon Fuel Company proposes to modify two federal coal leases at their SUFCO Mine in Sevier County. The proposed modifications are contiguous and combined, totaling 790 acres and containing an estimated 6.25 million tons of recoverable coal. The SUFCO Mine is approximately 25 miles east of Salina. (4/4/18)

**May 1 – 2.** The May 2018 Sage Grouse Task Force meeting will be held in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The meeting will be attended by Deputy Director Brian Steed, SOL Cally Younger, and other BLM staff. The meeting will take place on May 1, and participants will attend a field visit on May 2. (4/4/18)

**May 1 – 3.** BLM-UT. The Bears Ears National Monument Planning Interdisciplinary Team will meet with cooperating agencies in Monticello for a face-to-face workshop focused on developing preliminary alternatives for the Bears Ears National Monument Draft Monument Management Plan, scheduled for release in July 2018. Invitations to sign cooperating agency Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were sent to representatives of the following agencies: San Juan County Commission, Manti La-Sal National Forest, Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office (State of Utah), National Park Service (Southeast Group), State of Utah Trust Lands Administration, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, and Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation. As of April 13, the following entities have signed an MOU: San Juan County Commission, Manti La-Sal National Forest and National Park Service (Southeast Group). (4/4/18)

**[NEW] May 1.** BLM-NV. The Ely District Bristlecone Field Office begins a 15-day public comment period for a proposed competitive sale of three parcels of public lands totaling 431-plus acres in White Pine County. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 1.** BLM-NM. The Amarillo Field Office will announce plans to hold an auction on July 18 to sell Federally owned helium. The Federal Helium Program is responsible for the conservation and sale of federally owned helium. The BLM operates and maintains a helium storage reservoir, enrichment plant and pipeline system, near Amarillo, Texas, that supplies enough helium to meet more than 40 percent of domestic demand for the gas. The field office will announce the auction and sale in a Federal Register Notice. The package is with WO-100. The DTS number is 1900. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 1.** BLM-NM. Staff for Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), including Senate Indian Affairs Committee Democratic Staff and Senate Appropriations Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee Democratic Staff, will visit Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument. They have requested a briefing on the history of the monument and the hike. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 1.** BLM-NM. Joe Britton, Chief of Staff for Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) will visit the Sabinoso Wilderness. Victoria Barr, Farmington District Manager; Sarah Schlanger, Branch Chief for Resources; and Lisa Morrison, Deputy Chief for Communications; will attend the visit with Mr. Britton. (4/20/18)

**May 1.** BLM-MT/DK. The Butte Field Office is beginning to identify issues for a project to establish a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) in the Scratchgravel Hills area near Helena, Montana. The Field Office sent out a scoping letter to stakeholders and issued a news release soliciting public scoping comments on March 20; the scoping period runs through May 1. The RAMP proposes to improve and enhance recreational opportunities and experiences in the Special Recreation Management Area by: formally developing a purpose-built trail system, open to a variety of non-motorized uses including mountain biking, hiking, and equestrians; identifying specific trail use zones; improving signage and visitor information; and providing sustainable options for existing trails. Though the initial proposed plan has drawn widespread support from recreation user groups, there is potential for controversy among some local landowners. (3/7/18)

**[NEW] May 2.** NIFC. Oregon Senator Ron Wyden and Idaho Senator Mike Crapo will visit the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, for a national wildland fire briefing and press

conference to discuss the 2018 wildland fire season and wildland fire funding. Sen. Crapo's office may invite other officials, but who is not known at this time. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 3.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will release for public review and comment an EA analyzing a proposal to gather and remove excess wild horses from the Onaqui Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA) and a 10-year plan to maintain appropriate management levels using PZP fertility control and periodic removal of horses. The HMA has a current population of 455 horses with a projected number of 500 with the 2018 foal crop. The BLM proposes to gather and remove approximately 379 horses to reach a low Appropriate Management Level of 121. The Onaqui Mountain HMA is located in Tooele County, Utah, approximately an hour drive from Salt Lake City. The gather will most likely be controversial with horse advocacy groups, range organizations, and the general public due to the HMA's proximity to Salt Lake City and popularity. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 3.** BLM-OR/WA. The Coos Bay District Office will release the Decision Record for the Chetco Fire Salvage Categorical Exclusion. The District released the Categorical Exclusion for public comment from April 6-13, 2018 and received two comments. The project includes 140 acres of harvest to salvage trees in the harvest land base that were damaged during the summer 2017 Chetco Bar Fire. After issuing the decision, the timber will be sold at an oral auction on May 23, 2018. The decision to salvage the timber may be controversial. (3/30/18)

**May 4.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona Strip Field Office has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) of R & J Stone LLC's proposal to continue surface mining activities for selenite gypsum on the unpatented R H B Dixie Bell #1 and #2 lode mining claims. R & J Stone is a small, local, family-operated business and continuation of mining would maintain three jobs. Each claim is 20 acres; however, the active area or deposit is confined to 2 acres – 1.7 is prospect area and 0.3 is where the current disturbance lies. The claimant has proposed mining 50-100 tons of selenite gypsum per year. The project area is located approximately 10 miles southeast of St. George, Utah and 1.5 miles south of the Utah/Arizona state line in northwestern Mohave County, Arizona. The EA has a 30-day public comment period which ends on May 4. (4/4/18)

**May 4.** BLM-ID. The Owyhee Field Office is finalizing its assessment and evaluation of Idaho's Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for the Rockville Allotment and is planning to initiate public scoping on May 4. The Rockville Allotment is part of the Battle Creek litigation in U.S. District Court of Idaho. Owyhee Field Office leaders expect some controversy associated with this permit renewal as some standards are not being met. (4/11/18)

**May 4.** BLM-WY. The Combined Dispatch Center in Casper will host a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. to inaugurate the newly combined dispatch centers from Casper and Rawlins. This consolidated center will serve both the High Plains District and High Desert District BLM fire programs. Additionally, the center will support the Medicine Bow National Forest and the Thunder Basin National Grassland. The Wyoming State Forestry Division fire program is also dispatched from this center. County commissions from all of the counties served, the Wyoming congressional delegation, the Forest Service, the Wyoming State Forestry Division and county fire partners are invited to attend. No controversy is expected. (4/11/18)

**[NEW] May 7.** BLM-MT/DK. BLM staff will meet with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), American Colloids Company and Wyoben regarding plans of operation and permitting bentonite mining in sage grouse habitat. American Colloids Company

and Wyoben are two principle operators for bentonite mining and have submitted Plans of Operations under 43 CFR 3809. Located near the Wyoming border along the western flank of the Pryor Mountains near Warren, Montana, the mines are mapped as Priority Habitat for Sage Grouse. The operators need an approved Plan of Operations from the BLM and an Opencut Permit from Montana DEQ. The meeting will address procedure for issuing both permits. Attending for the BLM include Nate Arave, Solid Minerals Branch Chief; Dave Lefevre, Billings Field Office Assistant Field Manager; Dorothy Van Oss, Geologist; and Amy Waring, Mitigation Specialist. Caroline Sime will represent the State of Montana Sage Grouse oversight team. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 7-11.** BLM-ES will submit a Federal Register notice for a solicitation for bids, for a competitive 10-year renewable lease of the Equestrian Facility at the Meadowood Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) near Lorton, Virginia. The lease will be issued under Section 302 of the Federal Land and Policy Management Act (FLPMA), and 43 CFR 2920. Issuance of the lease will bring BLM-ES in compliance with BLM IM No. 2016-030 “Guidance for Issuing Commercial Leases for Recreation-Related Businesses,” promulgated in response to the Office of Inspector General’s (OIG) March 30, 2015 report, “Review of Bureau of Land Management’s Concession Management Practices.” (4/20/18)

**May 7.** BLM-AK. The EPA published a Notice of Availability (NOA) on the Greater Moose’s Tooth 2 (GMT2) Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on March 23 and the BLM published an NOA on March 29 in the Federal Register. Publication opened a 45-day public comment period, which closes on May 7, 2018. The Draft Supplemental EIS analyzes an application for oil and gas development of the GMT2 production pad in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and supplements an earlier analysis of the project in the 2004 Alpine Satellite Development Plan. Under the preferred alternative identified in the Draft Supplemental EIS, the associated pipeline and access road would cross both Kuukpik Corporation-owned lands and federally-managed lands within the NPR-A. The infrastructure would also connect to the Greater Moose’s Tooth 1 development, which is eight miles away. Public meetings will be held in Anchorage April 16, Fairbanks April 17, and the North Slope communities of Utqiagvik April 9, Atkasuk April 10, Anaktuvuk Pass April 12, and Nuiqsut April 18. BLM AK Acting State Director Karen Mouritsen plans to attend the April 18 Nuiqsut public hearing. (2/28/18)

**May 7.** BLM-MT/DK. The North Central Montana District is in the process of renewing the grazing permits on 114 grazing allotments in the Bears Paw to Missouri River Breaks planning area. This planning area contains 298,668 acres of public land that is mainly located in the southern portion of Phillips, Blaine and Chouteau Counties in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument (Monument) and the Havre Field Office. Western Watersheds Project recently hired a new public policy consultant and Montana Coordinator. The Acting Monument Manager and members of his staff will take the new coordinator on a field trip of the Monument to provide him with an on-the-ground understanding of the opportunities and challenges the BLM intends to address with these grazing permit renewals while working to develop a better working relationship with the organization. (3/23/18)

**May 7.** BLM-WY published the [Notice of Availability](#) (NOA) for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Riley Ridge to Natrona Project on March 23, 2018. Publication of the NOA announced the availability of the Draft EIS and opened a 45-day public comment period that closes on May 7. Denbury Green Pipeline-Riley Ridge, LLC is proposing to construct a 16- and 24- inch carbon dioxide pipeline and associated facilities along a 243-mile

linear right-of-way through Fremont, Sublette, Sweetwater and Natrona Counties in central and western Wyoming. The project would create approximately 380 direct jobs and generate \$1.7 million in state and local tax revenue during construction. (2/21/18) DTS 1749

**[NEW] May 8-11.** BLM-UT. The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will hold its second cooperating agency meeting/workshop in Kanab, Utah, to develop preliminary alternatives for four Draft Management Plans - the Grand Staircase Unit, the Kaiparowits Unit and the Escalante Canyons Unit of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, as well as public lands that were excluded from the Monument. Draft Management Plans are scheduled for release in July 2018. Invitations to join the planning effort as cooperating agencies were extended to: Garfield County Commission, Kane County Commission, Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office (PLPCO), National Park Service (Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Bryce Canyon National Park, and Capitol Reef National Park), and Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians. As of April 17, the following entities have signed an MOU: National Park Service and PLPCO. MOUs with the remaining cooperating agencies are being finalized. The public comment period ended on April 13, and as of April 16, more than 120,000 comments have been received. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 8.** BLM-MT/DK. Representatives from the Crow Tribe, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the BLM Miles City Field Office will meet in Crow Agency, Montana, to discuss the status of fluid mineral projects and future development on the Crow Reservation. The agenda is yet to be solidified. BLM attendees will include Todd Yeager (Acting District Manager), Eric Lepisto (Acting Field Manager), Shane Findlay (Assistant Field Manager, Minerals), and Paul Helland (Petroleum Engineer). Media and public have not been invited. (4/20/18)

**May 8.** BLM-MT/DK. The 30-day comment period begins on an Environmental Assessment that addresses the potential suitability to assign just over 5,816.63 acres of land in Prairie, Custer, and Richland counties to the State of Montana. These parcels were part of a larger list of lands in which the State of Montana expressed interest in a December 2015 application with the BLM. Under the law admitting the State of Montana to the Union, known as the Enabling Act of 1889, the State was entitled to sections 16 and 36 of each township. Many of the lands in these sections had already been entered by homesteaders or set aside for other purposes, such as Indian Reservations or National Forests, and the State could not receive them. Therefore, the State can select public lands under BLM jurisdiction in lieu of the section 16 or 36 lands it did not receive. Medium to low controversy is anticipated. (4/11/18)

**[NEW] May 9.** BLM-MT/DK. The Incident Commander Pre-2018 Fire Season Meeting will take place in Miles City, Montana. Agenda items for this coordination meeting will include agency updates by State of South Dakota, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the BLM. Other discussion topics will be aviation updates, dispatch operations, county command and communication issues, Line of Duty incidents, supply requisitions and other issues as they arise. BLM attendees include Miles City Fire/Dispatch staffers Scott McAvoy, Rick Lang, Amy Lancaster, Jeff Essman and Meg Geary. Media and public have not been invited. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 9-11.** BLM-CO. BLM Colorado outdoor recreation planners, recreation program leads and managers, as well as NLCS and partnership program leads will attend the Partners in the Outdoors conference in Breckenridge. The goals of the conference, hosted by Colorado Parks



and Wildlife, is to promote natural resources awareness, sustainable business growth, and responsible hunting, fishing and access for recreation. These goals align with the Administration's priority of shared conservation and serving American families. BLM attendees will serve on a panel discussion and a roundtable discussion, focusing on managing diverse recreation opportunities, access and permitting on public lands. BLM's attendance at his conference was approved consistent with IM 2018-013. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] May 11.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with Aurora City Water Resources to discuss permitting and scheduling for a potential new reservoir called the Wild Horse Project. The project is in its initial planning stages. If the City of Aurora moves forward with the project, it will likely involve rights-of-way for various BLM-managed parcels in Park County. The project is in its initial planning stage. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] May 14 – June 12.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its plan (pending approval) to gather wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area in northwestern Colorado. The Appropriate Management Level for the HMA is 135-235 wild horses and the current population estimate in the HMA is 544 wild horses. WRFO estimates that there are 374 wild horses living outside the HMA. This includes 305 horses in the adjacent, controversial West Douglas Herd Area. BLM has never managed West Douglas for a long-term wild horse population because of habitat and terrain, and has not been able to remove all the wild horses from this area. Many activists want to see BLM maintain a wild horse population in West Douglas. Conversely, ranchers in the area have long argued for the removal of all wild horses in West Douglas. In September 2017, the BLM removed 86 wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas HMA (but not from West Douglas) that were impacting private lands. WRFO is preparing a Determination of NEPA Adequacy for this year's potential gather, tiered to an environmental analysis completed last year. (4/10/18)

**In Mid-May.** BLM-ID. Boise District Fire and Aviation expects to sign the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-Grouse Habitat (BOSH) Project. The Final EIS was released for a 30-day public availability period on Feb. 9. The Final EIS, which was developed in cooperation with several state and federal agencies, analyzes the removal of encroaching Western juniper on 726,000 acres of sagebrush steppe habitat in Owyhee County. This juniper treatment project builds on proactive land management policies and practices to conserve the region's remaining sagebrush habitat, which supports significant economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, as well as abundant wildlife, including mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope and golden eagles. The public availability period closed on March 11. The BLM received ten comments, including comments addressing roughly three issues that will be documented in the ROD. The district is currently completing tribal consultation on the Final EIS and estimates signing the ROD in mid-May. (2/21/18)

#### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

**[UPDATE]** After receiving multiple requests BOEM has extended the public comment period for the Call for Information and Nominations for a Beaufort Sea Oil and Gas Lease Sale (in support the first proposed lease sale of the 2019-2024 National Program, which is tentatively scheduled for late 2019). The original comment period was scheduled to end on April 30. After the 30-day extension the comment period will close on May 30, 2018. Comments from the Call

will be used to inform BOEM's Area Identification decision. The target date for completing and announcing Area ID is end of June. (4/13/18)

**[NEW]** By April 30, BOEM expects to issue a decision on approval of a Site Assessment Plan for installation of a meteorological buoy to characterize the wind resource on Ocean Wind's lease located offshore New Jersey. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATE]** On May 8, BOEM expects to publish the List of Restricted Joint Bidders, which is a semi-annual list, in accordance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The *Federal Register* notice is currently with ASLM for surnaming and approval. This list will apply to lease sales held from May 1, 2018, through October 31, 2018. (4/13/18)

**[UPDATE]** By May 8, BOEM expects to publish a Request for Competitive Interest for an area proposed to be used for a right-of-way (ROW) project called Atlantic Link. Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc. filed an application on May 31, 2017 (revised August 22, and September 26), for a ROW grant in support of a proposed project connecting onshore wind and hydro power in Canada to the Massachusetts market via a 350 mile HvDC submarine cable traversing the OCS. Emera, parent company to Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc., has recently expressed an interest in slowing down their project timetable. The notice is in surnaming with ASLM.

On May 9, BOEM will host a New York Bight Task Force Meeting in Newark, NJ. The purpose of the task force meeting is to provide an update on the commercial offshore wind leasing process, present preliminary data analysis that will inform the Area Identification process, and provide the states of New York and New Jersey with an opportunity to update the task force on state initiatives and activities. Invitees to this task force meeting will include the NY and NJ task forces, as well as to up to two elected representatives or designated officials from the Governor's offices of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia to attend and participate. (4/6/18)

#### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

**The Arctic Rule:** The ASLM is currently reviewing documents to plan a path forward for potential revisions to the Arctic Rule.

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

Pending state approval of the permit revision, on or about May 15, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Falkirk Mine's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Falkirk Mining Company's Falkirk Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in McLean County, ND. The mine employs 412 full-time employees and 118 temporary employees and produces approximately 8 – 8.5 million tons of coal per year.

#### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### Bureau of Land Management

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-MT/DK. The Lewistown Field Office is preparing a Notice of Realty Action for Federal Register publication announcing the BLM's classification of 80 acres at Bynum Reservoir in Teton County, Mont., as suitable for conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The Federal Register Notice will also inform the public that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has applied to have the land conveyed from the BLM to MFWP. MFWP has maintained a fishing and recreation access site on Bynum Reservoir for over 20 years with a right-of-way from the BLM. The BLM Lewistown Field Office will convey the 80 acres to MFWP under the condition that the State will never sell the land or change its current recreational use; otherwise the land will return to the BLM. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-ID. The Decision Record for the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No New Significant Impact (FONNSI) for the Gateway West Transmission Line Project have been signed and a press release has been issued. The Federal Register Notice will publish in May. An announcement event is being considered for May in Washington, D.C. with the Idaho Governor, congressional delegation, local government officials (City of Kuna, Idaho, and Owyhee County Commissioners), and proponent companies. Construction of segments 8 and 9 of the Gateway West transmission line will create an estimated 1,360 jobs for a total labor income of \$23.1 million. Construction of all 10 segments is projected to support nearly 3,100 jobs with labor income of \$55.7 million. Gateway West is one of several grid-modernization projects underway to improve transmission capacity in the Mountain West and Pacific Northwest. It is expected to deliver enough power to supply 975,000 homes. (2/22/18) DTS 1973

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-WY expects to publish the Notice of Availability for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Normally Pressured Lance (NPL) Project. The Final EIS is currently under review by Washington and BLM-WY needs approval of the NEPA before advancing the Federal Register package in compliance with WO IM-2018-028. The proposed project includes drilling up to 3,500 directional natural gas wells over a 10-year period on approximately 140,000 acres. The NPL project is projected to yield between 3.5 to 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and between 17.5 to 140 million barrels of oil over the estimated 40-year life of the project. Project revenues are estimated at \$17.8 billion with federal royalties amounting to about \$2.2 billion, of which about \$1.1 billion would go to the State of Wyoming. The project would also bring about 954 full time jobs to the region during development. (2/21/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-NV expects to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with mineral segregation for the proposed Yellow Pine Solar Project in Clark County. The proposed project includes 9,290 acres of BLM-managed public lands 32 miles west of Las Vegas and 10 miles southeast of Pahrump, Nev. Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1722

**[UPDATED] In May.** A report to Congress on efforts to conserve Greater Sage-Grouse, restore sagebrush habitat, and implement a native seed strategy was due July 4, 2017, per direction from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017. The report has been prepared in final draft, but submission to ASLM has been delayed pending determination of the degree to which grants and agreements will be utilized going forward to achieve the purposes of the native seed strategy. (4/4/18) DTS 11379

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT expects to approve a Final Environmental Impact Statement for Alton Coal, which seeks to expand its existing mine by leasing federal coal on 3,581 acres of public and private lands near Alton, Utah. The Alton Coal Tract contains 59.6 million tons of bituminous coal, and the proposed action could extend mining operations by 25 years. The lease sale needs to occur by summer 2018 for continuous operations. (2/21/18) DTS 2032

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Notice of Intended Disposition will be published in four newspapers in the Four Corners region for two weeks. Publication will communicate BLM-Utah's intention to repatriate to the Hopi Tribe human remains and 4,121 associated funerary objects that were illegally excavated and/or disturbed in 2008 from Site 42SA9266 on BLM-administered lands in San Juan County, Utah. This notice is under review in Washington. (3/23/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-NM. The Carlsbad Field Office expects to publish the Notice of Availability (NOA) for its Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, outlining the BLM's long-term "landscape-level" plans and goals for public lands in Lea, Chaves, and Eddy Counties. The planning area includes approximately 2.1 million acres of Federal surface land and 3 million acres of BLM-managed mineral estate in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties. The NOA is under review in Washington D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 2012

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CA. The Central Coast Field Office will publish the Final Supplementary Rules related to dog management on public lands at Fort Ord National Monument. These rules also clarify rules in place since 1996 and are consistent with the Resource Management Plan. The rules are responsive to hazards from potential unexploded military munitions and explosives and visitor conflicts in a high-use recreation area. The rules are not expected to be controversial. The Notice is pending approval in Washington, D.C. (3/1/18) DTS 1413

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-AK is issuing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Taku River in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that the Taku River is navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title to the bed of the navigable waters and to restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 36,160 acres (35 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and the U.S. Forest Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/13/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-AK will submit a Federal Register Notice for revocation of five Public Land Orders (PLOs), which will open approximately 229,632 acres in the Goodnews Bay region for surface entry, mineral exploration and mining; it will also make the state selections effective, and allow the BLM to move forward in conveying lands to the State under their Statehood entitlement. The PLOs were issued in 1972, pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims

Settlement Act Sec. 17(d)(1), and were recommended for revocation in the 2008 Bay Resource Management Plan. The Notice is under review at the BLM Alaska State Office. (3/1/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-MT/DK. The Miles City Field Office has been working with 47 individual grazing permittees as it prepares to issue grazing decisions covering 114,773 acres of BLM-administered lands affected by wildland fires in 2017. The decisions would temporarily suspend livestock grazing on these BLM-managed lands until vegetative recovery occurs and the permittee requests lifting of the temporary suspension. Recovery is highly dependent on the annual growing conditions including precipitation and temperature, but generally occurs within 1-3 years. Permittees will not be billed for areas that were burned, or for areas in which the permittee chooses not to graze the BLM lands. The decisions will provide assurances to the grazing permittees that livestock grazing will be authorized in the future, and there is no expectation of any appeals. The data call on Proposed Records of Decision and Other Significant Decision Documents was provided to the Washington Office on March 1, 2018 and is still under review. Grazing decisions must be issued as soon as possible to allow for the permittees to plan their grazing operations for the current season. (2/28/18) DTS 13863

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CA anticipates approval to publish a draft Notice of Availability of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Land Use Plan Amendment for the revised technology of the approximately 4,200-acre Palen Solar Photovoltaic Project, a 6.7-mile generation intertie transmission line connecting the project to the SCE Red Bluff Substation. The Final Supplemental EIS analyzes the consequences of granting a right-of-way to construct, operate and maintain a 500-megawatt solar photovoltaic facility near Desert Center, Riverside County. The Project would create approximately 1,145 peak construction jobs and up to 12 full-time operational jobs. The project is controversial as it has attracted media attention and environmental groups have expressed concerns about the impacts to surface hydrology, groundwater, biological resources, visual resources, and air quality. Congressional interest includes Sen. Harris (D-CA), Sen. Feinstein (D-CA), and Rep. Ruiz (D-CA-36). State interest includes Gov. Jerry Brown and staff. Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1968

**[UPDATED] In May.** SO 3359 implements Executive Order 13817, which aims to reduce the vulnerability to disruption of critical mineral supply among other stated goals. The Order requires BLM to submit to the Secretary, within 60-days, a report with a list of recommendations to: 1) improve access to lands to explore for and develop critical minerals; 2) streamline permitting and review processes related to critical minerals development; and 3) otherwise increase critical mineral discovery, production, and domestic refining. The BLM has drafted a report with 13 recommendations across these categories that is under review in Washington. (3/30/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** At the request of the Department, the BLM prepared for the Office of Management and Budget a report on hardrock mineral royalties regimes in the United States. The report discusses options for a Federal royalty on hardrock minerals, litigation risks, legislative history, and provides additional background information. The report is under review in the BLM Washington Office. (3/30/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-NV. The Ely District will release the Final EIS for the Gold Rock Mine Project. The BLM will not issue a final decision on the proposed project for a minimum of 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the

Federal Register. The proposed project would add 300 direct jobs during construction and 150 to 250 direct jobs during peak mining operations. The project is located 50 west of Ely and 30 miles southeast of Eureka in rural White Pine County, Nevada. White Pine County and Eureka County are supportive of the project and the local rural economic development it will bring. Local livestock grazing permittees have expressed concern about the loss of forage within the fenced mine area, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife has expressed concerns about the project in regard to impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse and crucial mule deer winter habitat. The mining company has included voluntary mitigation to reduce these impacts. The Notice is under review in Washington. (4/4/18)

**[NEW] In May.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office will issue an EA for a 30-day public comment period. The EA analyzes a proposal from Grand County to create a small detention basin on public lands as part of a flood control project near the south end of Moab, Utah. Past flooding has affected local neighborhoods and U.S. Route 191 in this area. The construction of the basin will entail a minor reroute of an existing mountain bike connector trail. (4/20/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM MT/DK. The Butte Field Office is preparing to conduct a prescribed burn this spring as part of the vegetation restoration project in the Iron Mask Planning Area of Broadwater County, Mont. This effort continues despite a recent story in the Helena Independent Record that Native Ecosystem Council and Alliance for the Wild Rockies have filed a Complaint for Injunctive Relief in U.S. District Court seeking to halt the project. As of the date of this submission, the BLM had not been formally served with the complaint. Both NEC and AWR filed administrative protests and appeals with OHA and IBLA on these same actions, but did not prevail in that review process. (3/30/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CA is preparing an Environmental Assessment and Resource Management Plan Amendment for a proposed transmission and water pipeline right-of-way (ROW) associated with the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Project in Riverside County. In 2014, the Eagle Crest Energy Company obtained a 50-year license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to construct, operate, and maintain the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project. The BLM is processing a ROW application associated with the 1,300-megawatt hydroelectric project that includes a 500-kV transmission line and a 12-inch water pipeline energy transmission. The project is estimated to create 4,300 jobs during construction and will contribute to the state's energy portfolio. The City of Palm Springs and Cathedral City, environmental groups, and Colorado River Indian Tribes have voiced concern over the project, including its proximity to Joshua Tree National Park, impacts to critical or endangered desert species, and potential impacts to water, and cultural and historic resources. The project is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period for mountain bike trail system improvements in the Strawberry Special Recreation Management area in Grand County. The announcement is planned for late April or early May. The KFO's Approved Resource Management Plan designated an area in the SRMA specifically for trail opportunities focusing on mountain biking. The field office has been working closely with the Headwaters Trails Alliance, who submitted the proposal. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CO. The Rocky Mountain District and Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with representatives from Senator Gardner's staff to discuss recreational mineral collection in the Cache Creek Placer Area. BLM acquired Cache Creek – a 2,160-acre parcel –

in 2000 through the Land and Water Conservation program. The Cache Creek Placer Area Management Plan, approved February 2016, requires individuals to obtain a Special Recreation Permit to collect minerals recreationally in Cache Creek with stipulations defining allowed uses and locations, as well as prohibited acts to prevent resource damage. While mineral deposits exist on the property, and there is interest in claim staking in the area, the parcel is not open to the General Mining Law of 1872 since it was acquired post-FLPMA. The meeting date was originally scheduled for March 26 and postponed due to scheduling conflicts. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-AZ. BLM Arizona will publish its Record of Decision (ROD) for Recreational Target Shooting in the Sonoran Desert National Monument. A March 2015 federal court order required the BLM to re-analyze impacts of recreational target shooting on the monument. The ROD, which was developed after extensive public outreach and analysis, preserves access for target shooting on nearly 90% of the monument, while ensuring public safety in the area of heaviest family recreation use—the Juan Bautista de Anza Recreation Management Zone (RMZ). The ROD was filed with U.S. District Court in Phoenix on March 5, 2018, and the announcement will coincide with publication of the Notice of the Availability in the Federal Register. (3/7/18) DTS 1976

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office plans to release an Environmental Assessment of the proposed Buffalo Horn Land Exchange for a 30-day public review period. The preferred alternative would convey the surface estates of 14 parcels of Federal lands totaling approximately 2,815 acres in Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties for one non-Federal parcel in Rio Blanco County totaling 1,835 acres. Most parcels are within the White River Field Office, with one Federal parcel that includes lands in the Little Snake Field Office. The feasibility review found that disposal of the selected Federal lands and acquisition of the non-Federal lands would improve management efficiency of public land resources, provide greater public access to recreation lands, and help protect important wildlife habitat and cultural landscapes. A news release has been prepared and will be distributed once the Washington Office completes congressional notifications. (1/10/18)

**[UPDATED] In May.** BLM-UT expects to publish an NOA for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Enefit American Oil Utility Corridor Project in northeastern Uintah County. Publication of the NOA initiates a 45-day public waiting period pursuant to NEPA requirements of NEPA. The Final EIS analyzes Enefit American Oil's proposal to construct five utility ROWs along 40 miles south of Vernal, Utah. The notice is pending approval in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1817

**In May.** BLM-NV. A Federal Register Notice regarding the amended application for withdrawal expansion associated with the Naval Air Station Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization will publish no later than April 27, 2018. The Department of the Navy submitted an amended withdrawal application; the amendment is related to the Navy's original withdrawal expansion application. The expansion area consists of 769,724.34 acres of BLM-managed lands adjacent to the Fallon Range Training Complex in Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing Counties, Nevada. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/30/18) DTS 2033

**In May.** BLM-ES is working with the U.S. Coast Guard on a withdrawal revocation package for Lot 22 of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA), Florida. The BLM is the primary administrator of the 120-acre ONA, engaging in shared stewardship of the site in collaboration with local partners. The U.S. Coast Guard submitted a Notice of Intent to

Relinquish Lot 22 (16.41 acres) to the BLM in June 2017. Lot 22 includes the lighthouse, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and receives more than 75,000 visitors annually. The BLM is currently in the suitability determination phase of the relinquishment, which includes an environmental assessment, preparation of a suitability report, completion of a NEPA compliance document, and publication of a Notice in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office is planning to issue a decision on a proposal to expand the Fourmile Trail System outside of Buena Vista. Community-led meetings were held from December 2016 through February 2017 to develop the proposal, which includes ten miles of new motorized and non-motorized trails totaling approximately 18 miles. Concerns from ranchers, wildlife managers and private property owners were considered when the proposal was developed. Since 2002, the Fourmile Trail System had had several routes constructed, along with a series of trail improvement projects. (4/20/18)

**In May.** BLM-OR/WA. The OR/WA State Office will be requesting a signature of concurrence from the Principal Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management, and Budget for the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Selected Remedy of Operable Unit 1 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) cleanup of the Formosa Mine. The BLM is a co-lead with the Environmental Protection Agency for the Formosa Mine CERCLA cleanup, and are working together under a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed in March 2018. The Formosa Mine is located near Roseburg, OR. The remedial action of consolidating and capping mine materials will protect human health and the environment by eliminating or reducing exposure of mine materials to water and oxygen through containment, thus mitigating the migration of contaminants (cadmium, copper, and zinc) affecting surface waters at the site. It will also preventing human exposure to soil contaminated primarily with arsenic in localized areas at the site. The Concurrence Memorandum will be circulated for signature by the BLM Director and transmitted to the DOI Office of Environmental Policy & Compliance for further routing. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office has been requested to transfer 3,380.69 acres (surface and subsurface) to the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) through a noncompetitive direct sale for the appraised fair market value. The subject parcels are located on the western and southern margins of the Gila River Indian Reservation in Maricopa and Pinal Counties in Arizona, south of the Phoenix metro area. These lands are isolated from other BLM lands in the area and were identified as suitable for disposal in the BLM's Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. The GRIC is very interested in acquiring these lands because of their adjacency to its reservation and the presence of cultural resources significant to them present on these lands. The non-competitive direct sale is being pursued at the request of the GRIC, which was formally submitted in 2015. The BLM Arizona Land Tenure Steering Committee recommended pursuing this action in May 2015; this recommendation was approved by the Arizona State Director. The BLM has completed an appraisal to determine fair market value of the parcel (\$9,620,000) and is in the process of notifying other potential interested and qualified parties about the sale. (4/4/18) DTS 1804

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona Strip Field Office is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), in order for the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline project to proceed. The analysis in the RMP amendment will subsequently be incorporated into an associated environmental impact statement (EIS) for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project being completed by the Federal Energy



Regulatory Commission (FERC). The FERC is the lead agency to complete the EIS for the Pipeline Project; the BLM is a cooperating agency. The Utah Division of Water Resources is the Project proponent. Although only a small portion (900 acres) of the management area is affected, the BLM must complete the RMP amendment to address inconsistencies between the decisions in the current RMP, the proposed route for the Pipeline, and an existing utility corridor designated. Approximately 1.5 miles of the proposed Pipeline would run through the Kanab Creek ACEC. This information will be incorporated into the FERC's EIS for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. (4/4/18) DTS 1860

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office will move forward with release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) related to development of the proposed Sonoran Valley Parkway Project (SVPP) by the City of Goodyear in Maricopa County, Arizona. This project provides the opportunity to create immediate and future jobs, help bolster the growing local economy, and reduce emergency service response times. The City has approximately 77,000 residents and is part of the Phoenix-metropolitan area, which has approximately 4.5 million residents. The SVPP will provide needed enhancements to infrastructure as the area is projected to experience significant growth. The proposed project would involve approximately 475 acres of BLM-managed public lands. (4/4/18) DTS 1775

**In May.** BLM-CO. BLM Colorado is preparing a Notice of Proposed Reinstatement for Contex Energy's terminated oil and gas lease (COC77678). The lease is located in Archuleta and La Plata counties, totaling approximately 1,920 acres. The lease was terminated on June 1, 2017 because Contex Energy failed to pay rental fees on time. If approved, the lease would be reinstated with an increased royalty rate and rental fee. BLM Colorado is planning for a May 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its proposal to use bait and/or water trapping as the preferred method for future removal of wild horses from the Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area. The proposal includes continuing to treat mares with fertility control to slow population growth. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 35 and 65 animals. The BLM estimates the Spring Creek Basin herd is at the high AML for the HMA. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT is considering the non-competitive, direct sale to PacifiCorp of 200 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to PacifiCorp non-competitively due to the lack of public access and their ownership of the surrounding lands, pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-3(a)(4). Conveyance of the identified public lands would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT is considering the modified competitive sale of 160 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value to the adjacent landowners Hunter Prep Plant LLC, Ross Huntington, and Clinton Price. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to the adjoining land owners on a modified competitive basis, with Hunter Prep Plant, LLC as the designated bidder, giving them the right to meet the highest bid pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-2(a)(1). Conveyance of the identified public land would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office intends to issue a decision authorizing a Special Recreation Permit to Pinnacle Helicopters LLC for a shuttle service for river clients from the Canyonlands Field Airport to Mineral Bottom Airstrip. The proposal has been controversial due to potential impacts to other visitors' experiences, and an unrelated proposal from the same company to also conduct helicopter shuttles in Blue John Canyon, immediately south of Canyonlands National Park and near the Horseshoe Canyon Wilderness Study Area managed by the BLM Richfield Field Office. That request garnered regional media attention. (3/7/18)

**May 15.** BLM-CA. Bakersfield Field Office staff will participate in a U.S. Forest Service-led public meeting on four Applications for Permit to Drill in the Sespe oilfield in Fillmore, Calif. The Forest Service is the lead federal agency conducting the NEPA and the meeting is expected to generate much public interest, including previous interest from U.S. Rep. Julia Brownley's (CA-26-D) office, due to the wells being in a national forest and near a California condor sanctuary. (2/9/18)

**May 15.** BLM-OR/WA. The Upper Willamette Field Office, Northwest Oregon District, is proposing timber harvest using regeneration harvest and commercial thinning across approximately 1,160 acres within the Harvest Land Base—Moderate Intensity Timber Area land use allocation. The proposed project is located east and south of Cottage Grove, Oregon within the Row River 5th field watershed. This project is being analyzed in the Row River Timber Management Environmental Assessment (EA), expected to be released for public review on May 15. This EA analyzes harvesting approximately 50,000 MBF (thousand board feet) of timber expected to be sold between fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2023. This project is designed to conform to the Northwestern and Coastal Oregon 2016 ROD/RMP. The BLM expects that timber sale decisions analyzed in this EA will be protested and appealed. (4/4/18)

**May 16 – 17.** BLM-AK. The Resource Advisory Council will meet in Fairbanks. The agenda will include updates on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, the Greater Moose's Tooth 2 project, and the proposed Willow Development. There will be updates on current planning efforts, such as the Road to Ambler Mining District Environmental Impact Statement and the Bering Sea-Western Interior and Central Yukon Resource Management Plans. Five of the council's subcommittees will present their reports on placer mining, recreation, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Council members will receive an overview on Alaska subsistence; Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) including the Northwest Boreal LCC, Western Alaska LCC, and Aleutian Bering Sea Islands LCC; and explore partnership opportunities with local, regional, state, and federal entities. The council will also hear intertribal coalition presentations from the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Kuskokwim Fish Intertribal Commission, and Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission. The Federal Register meeting Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1939

**[NEW] May 16.** BLM-ES. A meeting will take place at Fort Knox Garrison, Ft. Knox, Kentucky, between the BLM-Eastern States (BLM-ES), Fort Knox Garrison (Department of Defense), and Louisville Gas & Electric. This meeting is the third meeting between the three entities, (the first occurring December 7, 2017; the second on February 15, 2018). These regularly scheduled meetings are opportunities for open dialogue between all parties who have an interest in the Gas Storage Area located at the Garrison. Five working groups were identified during the February meeting: Energy Resilience (including gas storage and forecast of plans); Security Concerns; Land Acquisition Documents (showing chronology); Environmental

Requirements (state and Federal); Coordinate Range/Training Plans for Troops. The working groups are expected to report out at this meeting. (4/20/18)

**May 17. BLM-CA.** Bishop Field Office staff, state and federal natural resource management agencies, and Native American tribes from eastern California and western Nevada will attend the quarterly Bi-State Tribal Natural Resources Committee Meeting in Walker, Mono County, Calif. The committee allows information sharing about resource issues. (4/4/18)

**[UPDATED] May 20.** BLM-UT. The comment period for the Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone Environmental Assessment ends. During the comment period, the field office will host a public meeting to provide information and answer questions regarding the proposal. The Cedar City Field Office released the EA for public review and comment on April 20. The EA analyzes the effects of leasing approximately 5,564 acres of public lands for solar energy development in Beaver County, Utah. Sensitive species that may be found in the project area include Kit Fox and Burrowing Owl. Mapped greater sage-grouse habitat is adjacent to the southern and eastern boundaries of the proposed lease areas. According to the Solar PEIS analysis, the solar energy zone encompasses portions of three perennial grazing allotments (13 percent of the Minersville 4 Allotment; two percent of the Minersville 5 Allotment; and 10 percent of the Minersville 6 Allotment). These allotments are used by nine permittees and support the production of 4,986 AUMs of forage per year. The Milford Flats South Solar Energy Zone was designated as part of the 2012 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. (2/21/18)

**May 21 – 22.** BLM-UT will host a Resource Advisory Council meeting in Salt Lake City. Agenda items include BLM updates from the State Director, fire dispatch study implementation, 2018 fire season outlook, updates on planning process Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears National Monuments, Watershed Protection Task Force, Mountain Accord, Washington County issues, Lake Powell pipeline project, recreation fee proposals, and planning updates. The public comment period will take place on May 22. The Federal Register meeting Notice published on April 2. (3/7/18) DTS 1945

**[NEW] May 23.** BLM-MT/DK. Indian Outreach Meetings will take place in Mandaree, North Dakota. Representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, BLM, Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), and Office of Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) will be available to answer questions by individual Indian Mineral interest owners on mineral ownership, development and royalties. ONRR will mail a meeting notice reminder to individuals living locally and advertise in local media. This is not an event where media or general (non-allottee) public have been invited. (4/20/18)

**May 23.** The Annual Making a Difference National Volunteer Awards ceremony will take place at 1:00 pm Eastern Time in Room 5071 at the Main Interior Building (MIB). Winners will be determined in early April, and those selected will travel to their state offices to receive their awards. Each state office hosting a winner will be live-linked through the video teleconferencing system to MIB for the ceremony. (3/20/18)

**[UPDATED] Late-May.** BLM-WY. The Buffalo Field Office will release the I-90 Corridor Travel Management Draft Environmental Assessment. The release of the Draft EA will initiate a public scoping period that will end in June or July. Two public meetings will also be held during this period, the dates of which have not yet been determined. On March 8, the BLM began issuing letters to affected landowners and grazing lessees, informing them of the BLM's desire to

obtain easements and/or exchanges, which will assist the BLM in designating travel routes to provide easier public access to BLM lands for recreational opportunities. In the effort to be a good neighbor, the Field Office is respecting the demanding schedules of working ranches as it continues to work with them to determine their access needs and their interest in facilitating enhanced public access. The BLM has briefed county commissioners and congressional representatives in routine meetings. The goal of these letters is to open dialogue regarding potential easements/exchanges and come to mutually beneficial agreements with affected landowners. (3/1/18)

**[UPDATED] Late May.** BLM-ID. The Boise District is completing an environmental analysis to authorize the use of 18 herbicide active ingredients as authorized by the BLM in the 2016 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Aminopyralid, Fluroxypyr, and Rimsulfuron on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and the 2007 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The forthcoming decision will determine how noxious weeds and invasive plants will be managed on public lands within the Boise District. A signed decision is expected in late May. (3/20/18)

**[UPDATED] Late May.** BLM-MT/DK. A March 23, 2018, order by the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana identified National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) deficiencies in the Miles City Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the Buffalo (Wyoming) RMP. The court directed the BLM and plaintiffs to attempt to reach an agreement no later than May 23, 2018, and to prepare an expedited schedule for preparation of a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for both RMPs. Due to the court-identified NEPA deficiencies, the BLM anticipates postponing the scheduled June 12, 2018, oil and gas lease sale for 217 nominated oil and gas lease parcels within the Miles City Field Office. The BLM expects to make a final decision on the postponement and make the decision public by the end of May. (3/30/18)

**[UPDATED] May 31.** BLM-CO. The Southwest District has prepared a Notice of Proposed Meeting for the Southwest Resource Advisory Council. Pending publication in the Federal Register, the meeting will be held in Fruita. Planned agenda items include training members on their participation on the Recreation Resource Advisory Council, recreation fee proposals, the close-out of the Dominguez-Escalante Advisory Council and forming a subcommittee dedicated to partnership-based trail building in the Grand Junction area. The Federal Register Notice package is currently being routed in the WO (WO DTS 2068). The Southwest District is planning on a May 1, 2018 (pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. (4/3/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) has prepared a Notice of Realty Action for a direct sale of 7.55 acres to resolve a longstanding trespass issue. Anderson Summer Camp purchased property and associated buildings in Eagle County in 1979. In 2014, the camp discovered that some of their base and other buildings are located on BLM lands. They notified the BLM when they discovered this. The CRVFO is planning for a spring 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. (4/11/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office is preparing a Notice of Availability and an Environmental Assessment for a draft amendment to its 2015 Resource Management Plan (RMP) and is evaluating 17 nominated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). The

effort addresses an error in the Tres Rios RMP, which did not adequately address nominated ACECs. The field office is working toward spring 2018 publication in the Federal Register. The key issues include potential impacts to solid minerals exploration and production, as well as possible restrictions on access and rights-of-way. (3/23/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will release a Draft Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Colorado River between Parshall and State Bridge for a 30-day public review period. The RAMP addresses alternatives to better manage increasing use in this area, which sees more than 90,000 float-boaters and anglers each season. Alternatives include adding unlimited day-use permits, expanding a developed campground and designating river campsites. (3/16/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Little Snake Field Office and Northwest District plan to announce a public scoping period in late April or early May for a summer bait-trap wild horse gather in the Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area (HMA). The proposed gather is under review in Washington, D.C. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 163 and 362 wild horses. The BLM estimates the population in the HMA exceeds 700 horses. The Field Office and district have been working closely with a local partner group—the Sand Wash Advocacy Team—to treat mares with fertility control to slow the population growth. (3/16/18)

**[UPDATED] Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of four parcels totaling 6.72 acres to the City of Black Hawk in Gilpin County. The adjacent, surrounding lands are primarily owned by the city and they intend to use the parcels for infrastructure, recreation and open space. The parcels are currently segregated from the 1872 Mining Law. The segregation will expire May 5. The proposal is not considered controversial. The potential for controversy would increase if the segregation period expires due to the possibility of nuisance claims being filed on the parcels, which would interfere with the city's plan. RGFO is planning for a Spring 2018 (before the segregation expiration, pending WO and DOI approval) publication in the Federal Register. Revisions to the NORA and the DOI briefing paper, as well as parcel maps were sent to Acting Senior Policy Advisor Kevin Oliver on April 11. (2/7/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office has prepared a Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement evaluating an exchange of certain Federal Lands for properties owned by Galloway, Inc., owners of the Blue Valley Ranch. Under the proposal, the BLM would convey approximately 1,489 acres of public land in Grand County to Blue Valley Ranch in exchange for 1,830 acres of privately held land in Summit and Grand counties. If approved the exchange would allow the BLM to improve public access, facilitate recreation and increase big-game winter range in the area. The field office is planning to publish in the Federal Register in Spring 2018. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1955

**[UPDATED] Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of 0.16 acres in Garfield County to adjacent landowners who inadvertently built part of their home on BLM-managed land. The CRVFO is planning for a Spring 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is part of an IBLA case settlement to resolve this long-standing trespass issue. As part of the settlement, the landowners agreed to two easements across their private land to access BLM lands with no previous legal access. (3/7/18)

**Spring 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office will begin initiating the management plan for two parcels acquired in March 2017 through the Sutey Ranch Land Exchange after a Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. The Colorado River Valley Field Office is planning for a spring 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval). The planning effort will result in an amendment to the approved Colorado River Valley Resource Management Plan. The 557-acre Sutey Ranch parcel includes high wildlife value and high potential for recreation. The 112-acre Haines parcel is popular with mountain bikers in particular. There is significant community interest in this planning effort. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1999

**Date to be determined.** Silver Buckle Mines v U.S. – Litigation has been brought to the Court of Federal Claims for the illegal exaction of maintenance fees for the 2013 assessment year from holders of pre-1993 lode and sites. On Dec. 4, 2017, parties filed supplemental briefs. This is a class-action lawsuit. (2/15/18)

**Date to be determined.** Deposition in the case known as USAF v. 20 Lode Mining Claims in Lincoln County, Nevada. The physical location of the claims is in the far northeastern operation sector of Nellis Air Force Base and the deposition will be in Las Vegas. (2/15/18)

**In June.** BLM-CO. The Gunnison Field Office (GFO) is preparing a Notice of Availability (NOA) and preliminary Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on its proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment to assess domestic sheep permit renewals on 16 livestock grazing allotments in Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Juan counties. The EIS evaluates reducing contact between domestic sheep on BLM-managed lands and wild sheep populations to minimize disease transmission. GFO is planning for a June 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval) in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**[UPDATED] June 2018.** BLM-ID. The Four Rivers Field Office is working with the Land Trust of Treasure Valley (LTTV) on the acquisition of 560 acres in the Boise Foothills. The LTTV purchased the property in February 2018 and will transfer the parcel to the BLM through a bargain sale agreement. BLM Idaho intends to use FY17 Land and Water Conservation Fund Recreation Access funds for this purchase. These funds were available because the appraisal for another FY17 project came in lower than expected, which resulted in excess funds. The property is a critical piece that will provide public access to public lands in the Stack Rock area from the Avimor trail system. This property was identified in the Ridge to Rivers 10-Year Management Plan (in which the BLM is a managing partner) as a high-priority objective for obtaining public access for hunters and other recreationists. The property is also important winter range for big game, especially elk, and is in the most popular big game hunting unit in Idaho. The LTTV issued a press release on April 4 regarding their purchase of this property. A BLM press release will likely be issued in June when scoping is initiated, and again when the purchase takes place in late summer or early fall 2018. This final release could include statements from the Secretary, the BLM, the City of Boise, and/or Avimor. (4/4/18)

**[NEW] In June.** BLM-CA. The Bureau of Land Management is looking to publish in the Federal Register a 60-day notice to seek public comment on a proposed direct sale of 70 acres of public land in San Bernardino County to OMYA Inc., a global producer of calcium carbonate and distributor of specialty chemicals. The proposed land sale would allow the company to continue mining the high-calcium limestone deposits in the area through 2055, resolve past unauthorized mining operations, and meet OMYA's need for additional land. This proposal

would also be consistent with the Amended Mining and Reclamation Plan approved by the County of San Bernardino. Located in the vicinity of Lucerne Valley, OMYA Inc.'s mining operation generates more than \$800,000 per year in county taxes and provides jobs for approximately 100 workers from the surrounding communities. (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-MT/DK. The Missoula Field Office will hold the Black Sheep Timber Sale to salvage timber from BLM lands within the perimeter of the Little Hogback fire near Ram Mountain. The Little Hogback fire burned 43,733 acres in July 2017, of which 3,766 acres was on BLM-administered lands managed by the Missoula Field Office. The Field Office will be salvaging fire-burned and beetle-killed timber from 250 acres within the fire perimeter. The Field Office anticipates a yield of 1,500 to 2,000 MBF, which equates to about 500 log truckloads. This sale is not expected to generate any controversy. (3/16/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT. The BLM Moab Field Office intends to initiate scoping and hold public meetings for the Canyon Rims Travel Management Plan effort, which is 90,954 acres in the Hatch Point area, in northern San Juan County. This travel plan is scheduled to be completed by May 2021, as required by the May 31, 2017 Resource Management Plan Settlement Agreement. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT. The BLM Moab Field Office intends to issue an Environmental Assessment (EA) for public comment on Lisbon Valley Mining Company's proposal to expand two excavation pits and add a buried electrical line at the Lisbon Valley Copper Mine. Total additional disturbance on BLM land is approximately 37 acres. Mining was first approved in 1997 and current mine operations cover over 1,100 acres of BLM, State, and private lands. The BLM anticipates the consultation process will include a Memorandum of Agreement. The project is not within the boundary of Bears Ears National Monument, and historically, projects at the Lisbon Valley Mine have not been controversial with the public. (4/11/18)

**[UPDATE] Early June.** Four Rivers Field Office is working with the Nature Conservancy on the planned donation of an 80-acre conservation easement associated with the Hixon Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse Area of Critical Environmental Concern that would expand protections on habitat for the Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse. The Nature Conservancy is purchasing a conservation easement that they intend to donate to BLM for long-term management. This is expected to be finalized by early June. (4/10/18)

**[NEW] Early June.** BLM Four Rivers Field Office is coordinating with Ada County regarding a county ordinance to eliminate overnight camping within an area of the county that includes BLM-managed lands in the Boise Foothills, within the Ridge to Rivers trail system north of Boise. This area has been getting more use in recent years by people setting up impromptu camps and/or squatting in trailhead parking lots and day-use areas. This county ordinance would reduce conflicts with trail users, and Ada County expects that this will be in effect by June 2018. (4/20/18)

**[NEW] June 4-8.** BLM-Eastern States (BLM-ES) proposes transfer by Quiet Title Deed of a former railroad Right of Way (ROW) to the Village of Forsyth, Macon County, Illinois. The transfer was requested by the Village of Forsyth for use as a recreational trail, under the authority of 16 U.S.C. 1248 (National Trails System Act). The ROW is 200 feet in width and totals approximately 18 acres. This action has been reviewed extensively by the Pittsburgh Field Solicitor's Office and the Washington, DC Solicitor's Office. The transfer is supported by Illinois Congressman Rodney Davis (R-13th). (4/20/18)

**June 11 – 15.** BLM-NV leadership proposes to visit the BLM Washington Office and the Nevada Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. Specific staff and topics are TBD. (4/11/18)

**[UPDATED] June 19.** BLM-AK. On April 20, BLM-Alaska published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to initiate public scoping on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOI began a 60-day comment period that closes on June 19. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis that is required before a lease sale can be held. Because it is a major unexplored but potentially productive geologic onshore basin, oil and gas from the Coastal Plain is an important resource for meeting our nation's energy needs and achieving energy dominance. An award was made to eMPSi, a third-party contractor, on April 18 to support development of the EIS. (3/16/18) DTS 1996

**[UPDATED] June 20.** BLM-NV. The Secretary of the Interior is scheduled to sign the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 17 projects for funding. There are two Nevada signing event options. (1) Southern Nevada at Bureau of Reclamation for their Round 17 Capital Improvement Program (more than \$10 million at the dam); or (2) Northern Nevada at BLM-NV land acquisition (\$4.5 million - providing new recreation opportunity) and nearby fuels projects (\$5 million). The Executive Committee for SNPLMA requested the Secretary of the Interior approve \$78,002,276 of funding, including \$5 million for a Special Account Reserve and an additional \$3.2 million for SNPLMA Round 16B Craig Ranch Regional Park—a 20.57-acre acquisition project. SNPLMA funding advances the Secretary's priorities by creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt; sustainably developing our energy and natural resources; restoring trust and being a good neighbor; protecting our people; striking a regulatory balance; modernizing our infrastructure; achieving our goals; and leading our team forward. (3/23/18)

**June 21.** BLM-ES will hold a competitive online oil and gas lease sale of 24 parcels, all of which are split estate with private surface. The combined parcels total 2,202.87 acres and are located in Cleburne and Van Buren Counties, Arkansas. The sale noticed was published on April 10, beginning a 10-day protest period that ends on April 20. (4/11/18)

**[NEW] June 27-28.** BLM-NV. The Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (MOSO RAC) proposes to hold a meeting in Caliente, NV. Agenda items include updates on the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area recreation fee business plan, utility and transmission corridors planning updates, wildlife management and a tour of the Lincoln County Trail System. (4/20/18)

**In June or July.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will finalize the Skull Valley land exchange. This exchange is a single-transaction, multi-parcel exchange wherein the United States would convey 12,603.27 acres of Federal land for 11,586.32 acres of non-Federal land. The exchange would consolidate Federal and non-Federal ownership, provide management efficiency, and increase public access opportunities. The BLM would acquire 3,598 acres of mule deer crucial range, 1,417 acres of pronghorn crucial range, a 120-acre portion of the Pony Express National Historic Trail, and 587 acres of inholdings within the Cedar Mountain Wilderness Area. This acquisition of lands in a wilderness area would be important for



providing improved public access to an area that is popular with hunters, minimizing the complexity of BLM's fire suppression responsibility in a fire-prone area, and reducing the burden to a private landowner with inholdings in a wilderness area. (4/11/18)

#### Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

The week of May 21, BOEM expects to participate in a tentative meeting with the State of California and DOD regarding offshore wind off the coast of California. (4/6/18)

In May 2018, BOEM and BSEE expect to publish a Notice of Availability for a joint draft Programmatic EA for routine and ongoing oil and gas activities occurring in the Southern California Planning Area. The Final Programmatic EA should be complete by the end of FY 2018. (4/6/18)

By mid to late May, BOEM could issue permits for Atlantic G&G activities. In April, BOEM expects that NMFS will publish its Endangered Species Act Biological Opinion for eight Atlantic G&G permit applications under review by BOEM. NMFS has indicated it will issue the IHAs in late April, after the BiOp is complete, but will not issue an IHA for one of the applications, submitted by WesternGeco, as they have not completed the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) consultation for BOEM's permit process. BOEM's decision on the permits should take approximately three weeks after BiOp completion, and will include issuance of an EA for each permit. (4/12/18)

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

By May 30, 2018, OSMRE expects the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a lease for the Oklahoma Federal Lands: Pollyanna #8 coal mine permit revision. The applicant's existing coal reserves are expected to be depleted in less than 12 months; therefore, the additional coal reserve is needed to ensure continuous operations. BLM has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the coal lease on the expansion of the underground mine and is expected to have the draft lease completed in the upcoming weeks. With finalization of the leasing documents, MCR will be working on the development of a Mine Plan Decision Document (MPDD). Based upon OSMRE's close coordination with BLM during the development of the EA for the lease, we anticipate being able to adopt large portions of their EA for our MPDD. Future steps will include evaluation of the BLM EA for determination of NEPA adequacy, developing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EA, if needed, expected to be completed within 2 weeks following draft lease, followed by developing the EA and posting it for public review. Depending upon how much of the BLM EA that is adopted, the MPDD is expected to be completed by July 31, 2018. (4/3/2018)

By May 30, 2018, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for Liberty #8. The new lease by application covers 1,620 acres of surface mining activities. OSMRE is expected to be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss with the mining company processing procedures, outline NEPA responsibilities, the development of a schedule associated with leasing and the process of a mining plan decision document. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

On March 6, 2018, OSMRE was notified by BLM of a new lease by application for Federal coal in Haskell County, Oklahoma. Evans-McCurtain Mine would include approximately 1,300 acres. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for Evans-McCurtain by May 30, 2018. The remaining reserves on the proposed lease are recoverable only by underground methods. Coal thickness will dictate the use of continuous miner units or possibly a plow longwall. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

On May 11, 2018, Federal Defendants will respond to the Plaintiff's motion for summary judgment in the U.S. District Court of Montana. On June 8, 2017, Wild Earth Guardians and Montana Environmental Information Center submitted a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief claiming that OSMRE failed to adequately analyze the indirect impacts of transportation, failed to adequately analyze greenhouse gases and impacts to the air from coal combustion, failed to consider cumulative actions, and failed to prepare an EIS for the October 2016 mining plan modification decision at the Spring Creek Mine. Petitioners also allege that the mining plan modification approval was unauthorized because the lease was invalid due to an alleged delegation of authority violation. (2/15/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Pending state approval of the permit revision, on or about May 15, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Falkirk Mine's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Falkirk Mining Company's Falkirk Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in McLean County, ND. The mine employs 412 full-time employees and 118 temporary employees and produces approximately 8 – 8.5 million tons of coal per year. (3/15/2018)

On or about May 18, 2018, OSMRE plans to submit the Bull Mountains Mine No. 1's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Signal Peak Energy's Bull Mountains Mine No. 1 is an underground coal mine located in Musselshell and Yellowstone Counties, MT. The mine employs 260 people and produces approximately 6 – 10 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/15/2018)

**[NEW]** Pending state approval of the permit revision, on or about May 23, OSMRE plans to submit the Sufco Mine's Greens Hollow Lease Tract mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. The Canyon Fuel Company's Sufco Mine is an underground coal mine located in Sevier and Sanpete Counties, UT. The mine employs 383 people and produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (4/12/2018)

On or about May 25, 2018, OSMRE plans to publish a notice of availability for the San Juan Mine Deep Lease Extension mining plan modification Draft Environmental Impact Statement in the *Federal Register*. The San Juan Mine is located approximately 4 miles northeast of Waterflow and 15 miles west of Farmington in San Juan County, New Mexico. The mine employs 360 people and currently produces approximately 6 million tons of saleable coal per year. (3/28/2018)

### **Awareness**

## Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) is preparing an EIS for the proposed expansion of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in the Gulf of Mexico. BOEM is a cooperating agency on the EIS. The draft EIS was published on June 10, 2016; a schedule for the final EIS has not been provided. NOAA, under Section 4 of Executive Order (EO) 13795, Implementing an America-First Offshore Energy Strategy, will provide the final proposed boundary expansion to BOEM for evaluation. As per the EO, BOEM must respond in 60 days with a full accounting of any energy or resource potential within the designated area. On March 13, 2018, ONMS requested shape files for oil and gas resources in the Gulf of Mexico; due to the proprietary nature of the information and that ONMS planned to share the information externally with their Sanctuary Advisory Council, BOEM was unable to provide the requested shapefiles. BOEM is currently working to determine what non-proprietary information can be sent to NOAA and shared with their Sanctuary Advisory Council. (4/13/18)

As soon as possible, BOEM would like to publish the 2017 Comprehensive Inventory of OCS Oil and Natural Gas Resources Report to Congress. This report is required by Section 357 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. It directs the Secretary of the Interior to provide a report to Congress within 6 months of the date of enactment (i.e., Aug. 8, 2005), with updates of at least every 5 years. This report is an update to the 2013 report. It is currently in surnaming with ASLM.

On March 9, the public comment period for the BOEM DPP closed. BOEM has received approximately 1.86 million comment letters. BOEM is currently reviewing comments and working on the analyses for both the upcoming Proposed Program document and the associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. (4/13/18)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND BUDGET**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

From April 30 - May 4, Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings.

#### Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)

From April 30 - May 4, Office of Aviation Services (OAS) Director Mark Bathrick will attend the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) annual conference in Denver, CO. (03/07/2018)

#### Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

**[NEW]** From April 30 - May 5, the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee minority staff will travel to New Mexico to visit DOI sites. The Office of Budget is working with the staff and bureaus on development of the itinerary. Olivia Ferriter, Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition will accompany the group. (04/18/2018)

## **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)**

National Level Exercise (NLE) 2018 is scheduled to take place April 30 - May 10, 2018 and will examine the ability of all levels of government, private industry, and nongovernmental organizations to protect against, respond to, and recover from a major Mid-Atlantic hurricane. The functional and full-scale portions of NLE 2018 will include the activation of DOI alternate Site Charlie on May 7 and 8. (04/13/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Early to mid-May, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will hold an introductory meeting with House and Senate congressional staff to review preparation for the current fire season and high-level Wildland Fire Management priorities. (04/25/2018)

On May 5, the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF), in coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), is tentatively scheduled to rollout a Fuels/Active Management communications strategy. Work is ongoing with DOI Communications and the BIA to highlight Tribal successes stories. (04/18/2018)

### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)**

On May 9, the Secretary is scheduled to testify before the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee on May 9. Deputy Assistant Secretary Olivia Ferriter and Office of Budget Director Denise Flanagan will support the Secretary at the table. (03/07/2018)

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

**[UPDATE]** On May 14, based on the vacancy of the Human Capital and Diversity Deputy Assistant Secretary (HCD DAS) position and the Policy and Environmental Management (PEM) DAS position, PDAS Scott Cameron plans to sign a memo temporarily detailing the offices from the HCD DAS and the PEM DAS to the Deputy Assistant Secretaries that will formally inherit those offices once Congress approves DOI's FY 2019 budget request. The effective date of the detailing would be May 28. (04/25/2018)

### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)**

On May 9, a report of the initial allocations of Hurricane Supplemental funding is due to Congress. The Draft Operating Plans were submitted for review to the Deputy Secretary. The final versions will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) after which the Office of Budget will prepare an allocation plan for Congress. (03/21/2018)

### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Human Capital and Diversity**

**[NEW]** On May 10, the Office of Personnel Management [final regulations](#) to implement the weather and safety leave provisions of the Administrative Leave Act of 2016 will go into effect.

The Office of Human Resources is in the process of drafting guidance to explain the impact of the new regulations on the workforce. Under the regulations, agencies may grant weather and safety leave (paid time off) when it is determined that employees cannot safely travel to or from, or perform work at, their normal worksite, a telework site, or other approved location because of severe weather or another emergency situation. Under the statute, an agency will be unable, in most circumstances, to grant weather and safety leave to an employee who is a telework program participant and able to safely perform telework at the employee's home. This new provision will apply regardless of what is stated (or not stated) in the employee's telework agreement and in agency policies and agreements. (04/25/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Management (DAS PRE)

From May 29 - June 1, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Wildfire Committee Meeting to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. The meeting will be held in Napa, CA. (04/18/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

From May 30-31, the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) will participate in the annual national meeting for Emergency Support Function (ESF) - Protection of Natural and Cultural Resources and Historic Properties (ESF #11) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Patriot's Plaza Building in Washington, DC. The meeting will focus on updates from each of the agencies that comprise ESF #11, as well as discussions on how to improve support to States, Tribes, and Territories during FEMA-led activations. The OEPC and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will be presenting on DOI's programs and capabilities that provide support to ESF #11. (03/28/2018)

Awareness

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Human Capital and Diversity

**[UPDATE]** The Personnel Bulletin (PB) 18-01, "Prevention and Elimination of Harassing Conduct" went into effect on April 23. To date, one Bureau (Reclamation) has submitted implementing procedures to OHR for review. (04/25/2018)

**[NEW]** The procurement to replace the Employee and Labor Relations Tracking System (ELRTS) is in progress. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) is considering three solutions that have a DOI authority to operate including: Salesforce, ServiceNow, and Microsoft. OHR has scheduled a meeting with each solution provider on April 27 and 30 to demonstrate how their solution will meet the ELR requirements. OHR expects to issue a request for quote in May, evaluate quotes in June, and award the task order in July. (04/25/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Human Resources (OHR) recently issued the FY17-18 Pathways reporting data request to Bureau Pathways Program Officers. The data request includes Bureau hiring

projections for FY18 for each of the Pathways programs, including identifying STEM and mission critical occupations. Bureaus are being asked to provide this data to OHR no later than May 24, and OHR will review and submit the reports to OPM no later than May 31. (04/25/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

**[NEW]** On May 11, 2018, representatives from the Office of Acquisition and Property Management (PAM) and the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) will meet to discuss methods to improve coordination between OCIO and PAM on enterprise-wide acquisitions for Information Management and Technology. The purpose of PAM/OCIO collaboration is to (1) develop a standard process and standardized content for mandatory use directives; (2) standardize a process for waivers; (3) create a single website for information related to enterprise contracts; and (4) develop an implementation strategy for new Acquisition Program Advisory Council policy to include establishing priorities for future enterprise contracts. (04/19/2018)

**[NEW]** (Per GAO, distribution is highly restricted): the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently issued a recent draft report “Cybersecurity Workforce: Agencies Need to Improve Baseline Assessments and Procedures for Coding Positions” (GAO-18-466) as required by a Congressional mandate within the Federal Cybersecurity Workforce Assessment Act of 2015. The GAO reviewed progress made by select Federal agencies with implementing the Act's requirements relating to cybersecurity workforce planning. The GAO issued 30 recommendations to 13 Federal agencies, including one recommendation that the Department: (1) evaluate the level of preparedness for cybersecurity personnel not currently holding professional certifications; (2) require these personnel take certification exams; and (3) report this information to Congress. The response is due May 11. (04/19/2018)

**[NEW]** (Per GAO, distribution is highly restricted): the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a recent draft report “Oil and Gas Management: BLM Could Improve Oversight of Lease Suspensions with Better Data and Monitoring Procedures” (GAO-18-411) in response to requests from the Chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources. The GAO reviewed oil and gas lease suspensions on Federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM.) This report examines the extent of such suspensions and the reasons for them and the approach BLM uses to monitor the status of lease suspensions. GAO issued BLM four recommendations to: (1) record the reasons for lease suspensions in its database; (2) enhance its database capabilities within the current or any future systems; (3) develop procedures for monitoring suspensions; and (4) conduct top-level reviews of the field offices’ monitoring of oil and gas lease suspensions. The response is due May 15. (04/19/2018)

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR WATER AND SCIENCE**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tim Petty will be in DC the week of April 30-May 4, participating in internal meetings and briefings. External meetings of note include a meeting with State of Idaho officials, including possibly Governor Otter, on water issues.

From April 29-May 5, USGS Deputy Director Bill Werkheiser will be in Reston, Va./Washington, D.C.

The week of April 29, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman will be meeting with stakeholders in the Colorado River Basin to discuss drought contingency planning.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

**[NEW]** On or around April 30, Reclamation's Provo Area Office will send out a press release awarding a \$6.9 million heavy equipment IDIQ contract. This five-year heavy equipment rental IDIQ contract will provide heavy equipment needs to support the Upper Colorado Region's Force Accounts operating out of the Provo Area Office. This heavy equipment is needed to provide in-house construction services on Reclamation facilities as well as other federal agency facilities. These services vary widely from embankment dam repair to wetland mitigation construction efforts. The location of these government facilities may be located anywhere in the 17 western states. Open press. (4/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On or around April 30, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office will send out a press release awarding a \$50 million cultural resource contract. The contract will allow the Western Colorado Area Office and Upper Colorado Region to obtain cultural resource-related services for various projects, including the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. The contractors will closely coordinate activities with Western Colorado Area Office archeologists who will conduct field inspections and review all documents under this contract. It is anticipated that project-specific cultural resource work will be awarded under this contract through 2023. Open press. (2/16/2018)

**[NEW]** Between April 30 and May 4, R&G Excavating, contractor for Klamath Irrigation District on the C Flume Replacement project, will continue to work on final projects. Work will include crushing old flume concrete, placing it over the buried siphon pipe, constructing a catwalk over the Lost River Diversion Channel, site cleanup, site restoration and completion of the gravel access-road. The C Siphon is located at Klamath Falls, Oregon. The C Siphon is ready to convey irrigation water as soon as water is available for the Klamath Project. (4/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On April 30, Reclamation expects to distribute a news release notifying the public of the availability of the Finding of No Significant Impact for a WaterSMART Program grant to Kern County Water Agency's Improvement District No. 4 to implement the Cross Valley Canal Extension – Pool 8 Lining Project. (4/20/2018)

**[NEW]** On April 30, Reclamation expects to distribute a news release announcing the signing of the Finding of No Significant Impact for an environmental assessment on providing \$622,926 to

the Bureau of Land Management for the BLM's purchase of 1,387 acres within BLM's Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area in Fresno County. (4/20/2018)

**[NEW]** On April 30, Reclamation will release final environmental documents analyzing the inclusion of additional design constraints to the Delta-Mendota Canal Groundwater Pump-in Program. The design constraints have been developed in coordination with the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority and participating water districts in order to minimize potential contribution of the program's impacts to subsidence along the Delta-Mendota Canal. (4/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On or around April 30, Reclamation expects to distribute a press release notifying the public about the availability of a draft environmental assessment for two funded projects from the 2016 Klamath River Coho Habitat Restoration Grant. The projects are located in California on tributaries to the Klamath River. One project is near Klamath, California, along McGarvey Creek on and near the Yurok Tribal lands. The other project is on Beaver Creek on the Klamath National Forest. Media interest is not expected. (4/2/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between April 30 and May 11, Reclamation is planning to announce the two projects selected to receive funding for drought contingency planning. Drought contingency planning funding is available for applicants interested in developing a new drought plan or updating an existing drought plan. The Assistant Secretary of Water and Science is reviewing the selected projects. (4/9/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between April 30 and May 11, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the data app prize competition. Reclamation, in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, is seeking the development of an application framework to support electronic data collection and capture across a diverse range of data collection situations using mobile devices. (3/26/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between April 30 and May 11, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the Long-Term Corrosion Protection of Existing Hydraulic Steel Structures prize competition. This prize competition sought ideas for long-term corrosion protection for large, hydraulic steel structures beyond the protection provided by available coatings and cathodic protection. (3/25/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Reclamation has completed work to address comments on the Central North Dakota Environment Assessment. Reclamation released the draft EA for a second public comment period on April 17. The comment period will remain open until May 2. (3/26/2018)

Between April 30 and May 1, Reclamation plans to release snowmelt forecast news releases for Wyoming's and Montana's Bighorn basin, along with Wyoming's North Platte basin. (4/10/2018)

**[NEW]** During the week of April 30, Reclamation plans to release the Heart Butte Conduit Repair Final Environmental Assessment and FONSI.



[NEW] On May 1, Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office and parties to the Abeyta (Taos) Water Rights Settlement will meet in Taos to discuss the status of the settlement implementation. A facilitator from the University of New Mexico's Upton Center will facilitate the meeting and assist with discussions. Recent meetings have experienced some media and public disruption. Both public and media are likely to attend. Reclamation has a limited role in the settlement as the entity that awards the financial grants to build the various parts of the project. Due to this limited role, Department Solicitors have advised (b) (5). Opponents of the project have been very vocal about the project and potential impacts to local water systems. (04/23/2018)

[NEW] On May 1, Reclamation Mid-Pacific Regional Director David Murillo will attend the Arvin-Edison Water Storage District's 75-Year Anniversary event in Bakersfield, California. (4/20/2018)

[NEW] On or around May 1, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the re-opening of Haystack Reservoir campground and day-use areas following completion of repaving contract. (04/23/2018)

[NEW] On May 4, Reclamation will issue a news release announcing the opening of the Hungry Horse Visitor Center for the 2018 season which will begin May 25 through September 8. (04/23/2018)

On May 1, Reclamation, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will announce their joint grant opportunity for Coho Salmon in the Klamath River below Iron Gate Dam. The goal of the grant is to identify projects to enhance the survival and recovery of Coho salmon as outlined in the 2018 Biological Opinion on Reclamation's Klamath Project Operations. On May 8, the agencies will host a public webinar to provide an overview of the programs and how to successfully apply for grants. The grant application deadline is June 1. Media interest is expected. (4/13/2018)

Between May 1 and May 4, Reclamation expects to publish a *Federal Register Notice* for the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group Notice for Nominations. The notice will request nominations from the general public and current AMWG members who would like to serve on the committee for a 3-year term. All nominees' personal information will be vetted by the White House Liaison's Office. The Federal Advisory Committee Act rules prohibit currently registered lobbyists from serving on Federal advisory committees. (4/9/2018)

Between May 1 and May 11, Reclamation is planning to publish the remaining completed Rural Water Supply Program Appraisal Reports. Timing is based on when the notice is published in the Federal Register. A news release will be issued in conjunction with the notice. (1/9/2018)

[NEW] On May 2, Reclamation and the Western Area Power Administration will host an informational exchange meeting and tour of Shasta Dam with the California Independent Systems Operator. Discussion topics will include authorities, legislative obligations and constraints in the ability to participate in the CAISO market and brainstorm joint opportunities for collaboration between all three agencies. The tour will consist of an operational overview of

Reclamation and Shasta facilities, the competing operational mission issues and legislative authorities, Shasta's day-to-day operational activities, as well as WAPA's operational overview, customer-provided services, environmental constraints on hydropower and planned transmission projects. (4/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On May 2, members of the Water, Environment, and Lands group of the Provo Area Office will hold a public Environmental Assessment meeting in Coalville, Utah. This meeting will serve to address any public concerns regarding Reclamation's design and construction of new State Park facilities at Echo Reservoir. A press release will be issued prior to the meeting. (4/16/2018)

**[NEW]** On or near May 2, a press release will be issued notifying the public that an unsanctioned gun range near Newton Dam should be closed due to ongoing safety risks and illegal dumping. The closure will provide a safer working environment for both recreational visitors and employees who maintain the facilities and prevent runoff from illegal dumping from leaching into the reservoir. (04/23/2018)

On May 3, Reclamation's Snake River Area Office Deputy Area Manager, Lanie Paquin, will present at the Idaho and Oregon Bankers Associations 2018 Agricultural Banks Conference in Meridian, Idaho. She will focus on Reclamation's mission and role in irrigated agriculture, highlighting projects in southern Idaho and eastern Oregon. (4/2/2018)

**[NEW]** The office of Rep. Jim Costa has contacted the San Joaquin River Restoration Program office to request a tour for the Congressman of program-related activities within the restoration area. A date of May 4 has been set for the tour. A tour itinerary is being developed based on interests expressed by his office. (4/20/2018)

Between May 7 and May 18, Reclamation is planning to launch the Pathogen Monitoring for Potable Reuse – State 1 Prize Competition. This Reclamation prize competition is cosponsored by Xylem, Inc., in collaboration with the Water Environment & Reuse Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency, with technical assistance from the California State Water Resources Control Board. Sponsors of the competition seek the development of improved monitoring techniques to protect public health and optimize the operations at water treatment facilities. Success could facilitate public and regulatory acceptance of direct potable reuse systems. (1/9/2018)

Between May 7 and 25, Reclamation will publish the Title XVI and WIIN funding opportunity announcement. Updated criteria for this funding opportunity were previously published for public comment on March 12. Title XVI provides financial assistance to local water agencies for the planning, design, and construction of water reclamation and reuse projects. (4/9/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

On May 1, the USGS will announce a new report that evaluates the condition of resources in Olympic National Park. The 400-page Natural Resource Condition Assessment, or NRCA, addresses the current status and trends of 12 resources that Olympic National Park managers

identified as species or communities of concern. The report was produced in cooperation with the National Park Service and a local news release is planned. (4/17/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 1, the USGS will issue a local advisory alerting communities in Montana's Phillips and Valley counties about USGS field work to collect bird data in grasslands. The release is extremely local and will be distributed only to two small newspapers serving Malta and Glasgow. (4/24/2018)

[**UPDATE**] On May 2, the USGS will highlight a new research effort to survey water resources in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain from the air. Beginning in late February, the USGS began the first in a series of flights in Greenwood, Mississippi, to acquire large-scale airborne geophysical data in support of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain (MAP) Regional Water Availability Study, part of a groundwater availability study in the region. The USGS is working in partnership with multiple state agencies. A top story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

[**UPDATE**] In May, the USGS will publish an online Science Snippet about a trio of recently published papers that show how fish, macroinvertebrates, and algae are affected by chemical and physical stressors in streams. The studies are based on the 2013 Midwest Stream Quality Assessment, which focused on 11 Midwestern states, and show that there are no pristine streams in the region. Chemical stressors, primarily nutrients and pesticides, and physical stressors, primarily excessive fine sediment and a disturbed riparian zone, have altered small streams and affected the number and diversity of fish, algae, and macroinvertebrates that call these streams home. (3/12/2018)

[**UPDATE**] In early May, the USGS will release a Scientific Investigation Report co-authored with the Bureau of Reclamation that compares and contrasts the two agencies' water-use information programs in the Colorado River Basin. The report also describes the legal drivers for each program, clarifies confusing terminology, compares the methods used, and contrasts the information reported by each agency. This detailed comparison shows how the different missions, programmatic drivers, and user communities of USGS and Reclamation lead to different approaches to water-use data collection, analysis, and reporting. Despite the differences, the program comparison presented in this report identifies opportunities for closer coordination and sharing of information between the two bureaus, as well as program components where inter-bureau collaboration can improve water-use estimate methodologies. (3/6/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

[**NEW**] On May 10, Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office will conduct the 43rd Project Construction Committee meeting for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. Agenda items will include reports on current construction contracts and ongoing design work and a review of overall project schedule and costs. Attendees will include representatives of the project participants (Navajo Nation, Jicarilla Apache Nation and City of Gallup), state, local, federal and Tribal agencies and entities, and interested community members. (04/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On May 12, Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office staff will volunteer their time by participating in the annual Navajo Lake C.A.S.T. event. Over 60 participants and 30 plus volunteers are expected for the day-long event, which includes volunteers and donations from several local, state, and federal agencies. Some FCCO staff members were recently interviewed by a local radio station to promote the event. The media is invited to attend. (04/23/2018)

On May 14, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office and the City of Durango will hold a celebration/dedication for opening Lake Nighthorse for recreation. On April 1, the City of Durango had a soft opening of Lake Nighthorse for a couple hours to non-motorized use. Lake Nighthorse is located near Durango, Colorado, and is part of the Animas-La Plata Project. The Western Colorado Area Office is working closely with the city on preparing to open to motorized use on May 15 and construction of additional basic recreation facilities. Local media are interested in Lake Nighthorse and coordination between Reclamation and the media will continue. (3/09/2018)

**[NEW]** On or around May 15, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the award of a \$5.9 million contract for the modification of Howard Prairie Dam in Southwestern Oregon. The awardee is the Natt McDougall Company of Tualatin, Oregon. (04/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** Between May 16 and 18, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman is scheduled to visit the Mid-Pacific Region. She will meet with stakeholders and tour some Central Valley Project facilities in California. (4/16/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected projects under the Drought Resiliency Project funding opportunity announcement. Through drought resiliency projects Reclamation will provide funding for projects that will help communities prepare for and respond to drought. (4/9/2018)

Between May 15 and 31, Reclamation will release the selected entities to receive funding under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. The funding was announced in an FOA this past fall. It provides funding to develop a watershed management group, fund an existing watershed group, complete watershed restoration planning activities, and design watershed management projects. (4/9/2018)

On May 16 and 17, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's Salinity Control staff will participate at the Colorado River Basin Salinity Council and Forum meetings at the Washington County Water Conservancy District Office in St. George, Utah. Upper Colorado Regional Director Brent Rhees, and Lower Colorado Regional Director Terry Fulp have been invited to both meetings. The purpose of the council meeting is to discuss and take appropriate actions regarding the following: Basin States Program created by Public Law 110-246, which amended the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974; responses to the Advisory Council Report; and other items within the jurisdiction of the council. Meetings are open to the public; media generally does not attend. A Federal Register notice announcing the meeting is being routed for Departmental review and approval. The notice is expected to publish on or near Thursday, April 26, 2018. (03/19/2018)

*[NEW]* Around May 18, Reclamation will conduct a second negotiation session with the Sacramento Suburban Water District on contract terms and conditions for a long-term Warren Act contract. The contract will be negotiated for the conveyance of up to 29,000 acre-feet of non-Central Valley Project water per year using excess capacity in Folsom Reservoir. A news release will be distributed in advance of the event. (4/23/2018)

On May 21 through May 24, Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region will host a bi-annual Power Operations and Maintenance Workshop with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Discussion topics will include technical subjects related to hydro powerplant and pumping facilities operations, maintenance, and engineering activities; best practices; and lessons learned. The event will be held at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, Nevada. No press is expected. (3/12/2018)

On May 22, the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group will host a webinar/conference call. A *Federal Register* notice is being routed for Departmental review and approval and is expected to be published around May 4. Topics of discussion will include updates on current basin hydrology, the Adaptive Management Program budget and workplan for fiscal year 2019, possible experiments at Glen Canyon Dam this water year, the status of AMWG membership appointments, and other administrative items as needed. The webinar is open to media and the public. (3/26/2018)

*[NEW]* On May 22, Reclamation will conduct a congressional briefing via WebEx, with the Idaho congressional delegation on Idaho water projects, operations and issues. (4/23/2018)

On May 23, members of the Lower Clearwater Exchange Project will be leading a tour of the Lewiston Orchards Water Exchange Project for Trout Unlimited and the Resources Legacy Fund with support from the Nez Perce Tribe, Reclamation and the Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District. Invitations have been extended to representatives from the offices of Sen. Risch, Sen. Crapo, and Rep. Labrador. The water exchange and title transfer are intended to benefit Snake River steelhead, protect natural and cultural resources important to the Nez Perce Tribe, and provide a reliable water supply for the LOID patrons. (4/02/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement on the New Mexico Unit Project. The proposed project is part of the Central Arizona Project, authorized by the Colorado River Basin Project Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90-537, 43 U.S.C. Ch. 32, as amended by the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA, Pub. L. 108-451). Pursuant to the AWSA, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to contract with water users in New Mexico for water from the Gila River, its tributaries and underground water sources. Use of Gila River water under the AWSA is conditioned on satisfying various laws and agreements related to the use and exchange of Gila River water in New Mexico and Arizona. The NM Unit will divert Gila River water in New Mexico for this purpose. The AWSA provided funding to construct the NM Unit or, to develop other alternatives in southwestern New Mexico to meet demand. Reclamation and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission are joint lead agencies for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act and other related environmental

regulations regarding the proposed Project. Issuance of the NOI will initiate the formal public scoping process associated with NEPA compliance. (3/27/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the *Federal Register*, to be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. The FR notice requests public comments on the Department's proposed decision to reallocate Central Arizona Project non-Indian agricultural priority water consistent with a recommendation made to the Secretary by the Arizona Department of Water Resources in January 2014. This process is in accordance with Section 104 of the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act (Public Law 108-451), which directed the Secretary to allocate to the Arizona Department of Water Resources up to 96,295 acre-feet of CAP NIA priority water; this water is to be held by ADWR under contract in trust for further allocation, until a reallocation recommendation is submitted by ADWR to the Secretary. In 2012, ADWR began the reallocation recommendation process, and on January 16, 2014, ADWR submitted its recommendation to the Secretary. As explained in the proposed FR notice, the Secretary proposes to make 46,629 acre-feet of the NIA Priority CAP water available under long-term contracts in the amounts and to the municipal and industrial entities identified in ADWR's recommendation. Reallocation of CAP NIA priority water would address the imbalance of water supply and demand in central Arizona by providing renewable water supplies to those entities with a projected demand/supply imbalance based on ADWR's evaluation criteria. (4/23/2018)

**[NEW]** In late June, Reclamation, Klamath Irrigation District, R&G Excavating, Klamath County, and the Klamath Basin irrigation community will hold an event to celebrate the completion of the new C Siphon which will convey irrigation water across the Lost River slough and Wildcat Canyon. The event will celebrate the success of the two-year construction project and a decades-long effort from procuring funding to construction. Media interest is expected. (4/23/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

**[NEW]** On May 22-23 USGS and USDA will convene a National Imagery Summit on behalf of the Federal Geographic Data Committee at the USGS HQ in Reston, VA. Invitations are being extended to over three-hundred Government-only attendees, composed of White House, remote sensing policy, and civil agency leaders who oversee U.S. land imaging operations. The event will be webcast to US government GIS and land management scientists and practitioners across the United States. The purpose of the Summit is to address emerging challenges in today's dynamic imagery marketplace, with a focus on shortcomings and conflicts in U.S. policies related to overhead data collection, data management, and the variety of roles served by U.S. Federal and State agencies in meeting public needs for remotely sensed data and applications. Attendees will discuss current and future national land imaging needs, the status of current national capabilities, and national collection and data management strategies. (4/24/2018)

**[NEW]** In May, the USGS will announce a new study that characterizes land and water surface changes and identify underlying drivers of change throughout Alaska from 1984 to 2015 based on combined Landsat imagery and climate reanalysis data. The study identifies the percent of Alaska's lands that changed during the last three decades, the ecoregion most affected, and the agent most responsible for the change. The study also discusses how increased air temperatures

affect vegetation growth and health and water availability. The study will be published in *Global Change Biology* and a national news release is planned. (4/20/2018)

In May, the USGS will release a new Circular entitled “Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2015.” This report documents the national compilation of water use data issued by the USGS once every 5 years for the entire U.S. The report will present state-level water use data for the year 2015 and discuss long-term trends in water use. An accompanying data release of county-level data will be made available concurrently with the Circular. Also, a data visualization for the Circular and county-level data is being created. All three products will be released concurrently, and a news release is planned. (3/14/2018)

In May, USGS will highlight research that examined differential changes in the onset of spring across U.S. National Wildlife Refuges and North American migratory bird flyways. The study used indices of spring onset, the First Leaf Index and the First Bloom Index, as proxies of habitat change for the period 1901 to 2012 at three spatial scales: the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System; the four major bird migratory flyways in North America; and the seasonal ranges (i.e., breeding and non-breeding grounds) of two migratory bird species, Bluewinged Warbler and Whooping Crane. The results provide insight into how differential shifts in the phenology of disparate but linked habitats could inform local- to landscape-scale management strategies for the conservation of migratory bird populations. A Top Story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

## **Awareness**

### ***U.S. Bureau of Reclamation***

**[NEW]** On April 19, Reclamation’s Albuquerque Area Office Deputy Area Manager Jim Wilber and Public Affairs Specialist Mary Carlson interviewed with Henry Fountain of the New York Times on the Annual Operating Plan for the Middle Rio Grande. The interview was based on a news release issued by Reclamation in mid-April when they held public meetings to release the plan. The forecast shows early and ongoing drying in the Middle Rio Grande and diminishing storage in our reservoirs through the summer. The interview was neutral. The reporter planned to talk to several other sources and didn’t have a potential release date for the story. (04/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On April 24, Reclamation’s Upper Colorado Region’s public affairs and water operations staff will participate in an interview at Glen Canyon Dam with Arizona Public Media, a Tucson affiliate for National Public Radio. The focus of the interview is Lake Powell operations, power generation at Glen Canyon Dam, ongoing drought and Lake Powell’s continued value to the western U.S. (04/23/2018)

**[NEW]** April 23, The Bureau of Reclamation’s Fresno Dam is experiencing sustained high inflows as a result of snowmelt runoff in the basin upstream of Fresno Dam. Inflows into Fresno Reservoir are decreasing and are currently estimated at 3,000 cubic feet-per-second. The current total release from Fresno Dam to the Milk River is approximately 3,400 cfs. The current reservoir level is 2576.4 feet, 1.4 feet above normal full pool level, 2575.0 feet. This elevation is the peak expected elevation based on forecasted inflows to Fresno Reservoir. Reclamation is advising local emergency management officials of these conditions for awareness only. Inflows

are expected to remain much higher than average for the next week. In accordance with the Fresno Dam Emergency Action Plan, Reclamation is required to notify downstream emergency management officials anytime Fresno Reservoir releases combined with downstream tributary flow exceeds safe channel capacity. Minor to major flooding is occurring along the Milk River. (4/23/2018)

At the Monthly “Assistant Secretary Meeting w/ the Secretary” on April 5, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tim Petty provided initial information to the Secretary regarding the Columbia River Treaty. An in-depth briefing will be scheduled for the Secretary, date yet to be determined. The in-depth briefing will present a Decision Memorandum for consideration setting forth the Department’s position on the priority of the key drivers for Treaty negotiation. The Department actively participates in Columbia River Treaty negotiations/activities through the engagement of Assistant Secretary Petty, and staffed by Reclamation, with the treaty’s two technical entities, Bonneville Power Administration and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. (4/2/2018)

Reclamation’s Dakotas Area Office is preparing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Reclamation and the Province of Manitoba regarding the development of the Adaptive Management Plan for the Northwest Area Water Supply Biota Water Treatment Plant. The draft MOU has been reviewed by the region, Solicitor’s Office, Department of Justice, and State of North Dakota. Presently, the draft MOU has been provided to the Commissioner’s office and Water & Science. (3/27/2018)

The April 2018 24-Month Study establishes that Lake Powell operations will shift to “balancing releases” for the remainder of water year 2018. Under balancing, the contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead will be balanced by the end of the water year, but not more than 9.0 million acre-feet and not less than 8.23 maf shall be released from Lake Powell. Based on the most probable inflow forecast, this April 24-Month Study projects a balancing release of 9.0 maf in water year 2018; the actual release in water year 2018, however, will depend on hydrology in the remainder of water year and will range from 8.23 to 9.0 maf. The projected release from Lake Powell in water year 2018 will be updated each month throughout the remainder of the water year. Based on the current inflow forecast and projected releases, the April 24-Month Study projects Lake Powell elevation will end water year 2018 near 3,598 feet, with approximately 11.6 maf in storage (48 percent of capacity). Currently, Lake Powell is 53 percent full, with a live storage content of 12.8 maf. (4/16/2018)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently published a press release (3/22/2018) announcing completion of a Species Status Assessment and Five-Year Review, which proposes down-listing the humpback chub from "endangered" to "threatened." The humpback chub is still classified as endangered, and at this time, it is only proposed for down-listing. If the classification of the species is officially changed to threatened, as the Five-Year Review recommends, it will remain fully protected under the Endangered Species Act. The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program have been key contributors to the recovery of this native fish. Reclamation's provision of flows to support native fish and participation in and funding of the conservation and recovery programs is a central reason this species is able to be considered for down-listing. Collaborative partnerships and management of resources have protected the species from extinction. (3/27/2018)



The Department and Reclamation are working with the Council of Environmental Quality on development of a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act for select types of title transfers. In cases where the transfer of title from Reclamation to a willing entity is non-controversial, non-complicated and would not result in a change in the operations or management of the facilities, establishment of a categorical exclusion could decrease the time required for Reclamation to complete title transfers. (3/20/2018)

Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the Federal Register to begin charging fees at Lake Berryessa in Napa County, California. The fees will be used to upgrade facilities and pay for costs associated with recreation. Reclamation will ensure visitors are aware of the proposed plan by holding public scoping meetings, issuing press releases, posting it on the Lake Berryessa website at [www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa/index.html), and posting announcements at day-use areas. During public scoping meetings and the public comment period, Reclamation will seek input from the public regarding the possible use of funds collected. Public scoping meetings and public outreach will ensure the public is aware of all proposed fees and passes available to them. (2/26/2018)

Legislation authorizing the Westlands Settlement (“Settlement”) (H.R. 1769) is pending before the House of Representatives. The current stay of the *Firebaugh* injunction expired on January 15, 2018, and the district court did not grant an additional stay. As a result, Reclamation is preparing to expend significant funds to implement the Control Schedule of drainage measures for Westlands as approved by the court and could face additional litigation. The January 2018 Revised Control Schedule identifies a funding need of about \$3 million in FY 2018. Based on Congressional action to date on the fiscal year 2018 budget, upon final passage Reclamation expects to be able to accommodate the \$3 million identified in the Control Schedule. If required, it also identifies a funding need of over \$12.2 million in FY 2019, which is not currently included in the fiscal year 2019 President’s budget; over \$13.8 million in FY 2020, over \$29.7 million in FY 2021—ramping up to a need of over \$101 million in FY 2023. The funding needs to implement drainage are significant and represent a substantial financial obligation for the Department of the Interior. (2/9/2018)

The Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region, Yuma Area Office intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement in early June 2018 to request proposals to fund projects for activities in support of its Endangered Species and Environmental Restoration programs in Federal FY 2018 (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018). The YAO periodically makes funding available for conducting activities for Threatened and Endangered species and their habitats under Section 7(a)1 of the Endangered Species Act under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Program. Reclamation has made \$110,000.00 of funding available for award for this FWCAP Financial Assistance FOA. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that FY 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Reclamation will limit total funding to generally not more than \$50,000 in Federal funding to each applicant. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Eligible applicants are state and local governments, non-profit organizations and institutions, public and private institutions and organizations,

federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments, individuals, small businesses, for-profit organizations, and Native American organizations. (4/9/2018)

On April 12, the Glen Canyon Dam Experimental Technical Team met with the Experimental Leadership Team and the Department of the Interior to recommend that Macroinvertebrate Production Flows, also known as “Bug Flows,” be tested between May 1 and August 31, 2018. The Assistant Secretary for Water and Science approved the Bug Flows via a signed memorandum dated April 13, 2018. Bug Flows consist of steady weekend releases from Glen Canyon Dam and normal fluctuating releases during the weekdays. The steady weekend flows are expected to provide favorable conditions for insects to lay eggs along the Colorado River downstream of Glen Canyon Dam, while the fluctuating flows during the weekdays are designed to be slightly higher, thus preventing the eggs from drying out. This experiment is expected to have positive benefits to the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in Glen, Marble, and Grand canyons. The purpose of the experimental flow is to test the effectiveness of Bug Flows on improving insect production and to increase the availability of food for aquatic and terrestrial life. This experiment will be conducted under the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan. On April 30, a press release will be issued. (3/26/2018)

### ***U.S. Geological Survey***

[**NEW**] Minor to major flooding continues in the Milk River basin in Montana. Melting of low-elevation snowpack has resulted in streamflows exceeding National Weather Service (NWS) flood stages at 13 USGS streamgages in the basin since April 11. As of April 23, flood stage is being exceeded at 7 USGS streamgages in the basin and all streamgages are providing timely, high-quality data. USGS hydrographers continue to take discharge measurements in flooded areas. The discharge measurements along with new or shift-adjusted ratings, and other information is being shared immediately with the NWS. The USGS is also participating in flood preparedness briefings held by Montana Disaster and Emergency Services. (4/23/2018)

[**NEW**] Recently retired USGS scientist, Kernell Ries, has received the American Water Resources Association (AWRA's) David Maidment Award for Exemplary Contributions to Water Resources Data and Information Systems, given "to recognize individuals who have made sustained contributions to water resources data by providing leadership in the provision of particular kinds of data, or by improving synthesis of water data using geographic and other information systems." The award was presented at the AWRA Spring Specialty Conference on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Water Resources held last week in Orlando, Fla. In notifying him of the award, AWRA cited Mr. Ries' "extraordinary vision and leadership in making streamflow information, StreamStats, available on the web to water resource and infrastructure managers." (4/23/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 4, USGS will host invited staff members from the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee at the National Center in Reston, Va. Staff will meet with USGS leadership and tour the minerals, energy and calcareous laboratories to discuss and experience USGS science where it happens. ASWS staff are also invited to participate.

[**NEW**] During January 20 to February 3, 2018, USGS scientists conducted field retrieval of wave gauges and current meters and took measurements of sediment deposition and erosion during two winter months at Gandy's Beach living shoreline project area, New Jersey. They also conducted an elevation survey to provide information on elevation change for modeling. During April 2 – 6, the team retrieved wave and current sensors, as well as measured vertical sediment erosion/deposition that occurred during the two winter months. The four nor'easters during March (Riley, Quinn, Skylar and Toby) were reflected in the preliminarily processed data of water level, wave and current velocity. These in situ data will be analyzed further for the assessment of the effectiveness of these living shoreline projects and for calibration and validation of hydrodynamic and sediment transport modeling. This project is funded through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Program and includes partners with Northeastern University, The Nature Conservancy, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (4/25/18)

On May 12, the USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory (Vancouver, Wash.) will hold a one-day public open house. USGS scientists will take a break from their day-to-day work to set up volcano displays and prepare science demonstrations to share with the public. The event is free and all ages are welcome. A local media advisory will be distributed. (3/27/2018)

[**NEW**] On May 16 and 17, USGS scientists will meet with the Nez Perce Tribal Council to discuss ongoing research to investigate mercury cycling and bioaccumulation on a section of the Snake River referred to as Hells Canyon. The USGS, in collaboration with Idaho Power Company and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, started the investigation in 2014 to evaluate processes controlling mercury transport, cycling, and bioaccumulation in Hells Canyon. The work is a collaborative effort with scientists from the USGS Wisconsin Water Science Center, USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, USGS Idaho Water Science Center, and the USGS Water Mission Area. (4/25/18)

[**UPDATE**] Executive Order 13817/Secretarial Order 3359 milestone reached: On April 19, 2018, the USGS delivered to the Secretary a draft plan to better assess the Nation's subsurface mineral potential through new collection of geophysical, geologic, and topographic data. Coordination with white house staff continues on next steps following the assessment of the comments received from the public comment period associated with the draft critical mineral list. Another Federal Register Notice has been suggested as an option. In the coming months, the USGS anticipates additional review and input from other Federal agencies and external partners, and ongoing revisions as required to inform the government-wide strategy to be published by the Department of Commerce in August 2018. Next steps in support of the Executive Order include USGS technical input to interagency drafting teams on: (1) the potential to better use above-ground sources of critical minerals through recycling, reprocessing, and substituting alternative materials; (2) existing foreign trade dependencies for critical minerals. (2/9/2018)

[**NEW**] In late June, a delegation of 180 officials from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are invited to meet at the University of Oklahoma, the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) host university, during the 2018 Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council Ministerial. The South Central CASC is planning to highlight their science work during the officials' visit and will be part of the University of Oklahoma's discussions for future plans

to collaborate with these officials and stakeholders. The CEC Council Chairmanship and Ministerial rotates between the US, Mexico, and Canada each year, and Administrator Scott Pruitt (current chair) selected Oklahoma City as the location for the 2018 meeting. The theme for this year's Council Ministerial is "Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth". (4/24/2018)

Beginning August 6, the USGS will conduct the Mid-Atlantic Resource Imaging Experiment (MATRIX) seismic project on Atlantic margin in partnership with BOEM and the U.S. Department of Energy. The goal of the project is to image distribution of gas hydrate and shallow gas on Atlantic margin between Hudson Canyon and Cape Hatteras across areas considered highly prospective for gas hydrates. Seismic data will be collected over a period of 2.5 to 3 weeks. An Incidental Harassment Authorization Application was submitted to NMFS in March, and initial comments have been received. The Draft Environmental Assessment and request for Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act was also submitted to NMFS in March. The draft EA is posted on the USGS Coastal/Marine Hazards & Resources Program's environmental compliance website and is open for public comment until April 19. (4/6/2018)

### **Upcoming USGS Publications**

[*NEW*] In late April a new paper entitled "Downscaling of climate model output for Alaskan stakeholders" will be published in the journal *Environmental Modelling and Software*. The paper that summarizes the end-to-end activity involved in connecting global climate modeling with users of climate information in Alaska. It describes climate downscaling efforts from start to finish for an entire region. This work resulted in a visualization package that displays the uncertainties inherent in the multi-model ensemble projections, and empower users to explore the downscaled model outputs and related sensitivities. USGS scientists are co-authors on this paper. (4/24/2018)

[*NEW*] On May 1 a new USGS paper entitled "Annual Summary of International Exploration" will be published in the journal *Mining Engineering*. This USGS summary of international mineral exploration activities from 2017 draws upon information from multiple industry and USGS sources and published literature. Three types of information are reported and analyzed in this annual review of international exploration: 1) budgetary statistics expressed in U.S. dollars; 2) regional and site-specific exploration activities that took place in 2017 as compiled by the USGS and 3) regional events and legislation that affected exploration activities including economic, social and political conditions, which were derived from published sources and discussions with USGS specialists. Because multiple sources were used to develop commodity and regional compilations, statistics may vary depending on the source and type of data that are being reported. The data summarizes budget estimates for worldwide exploration activities in 2017 for 30 nonfuel mineral commodities and metal alloys, based on company surveys. Surveys focused on precious metals (gold, platinum- group metals (PGMs) and silver), base metals, (cobalt, copper, lead, molybdenum, nickel, tin and zinc), bulk commodities (bauxite, chromite, iron ore, manganese, phosphate and potash), and other commodities (aluminum, antimony, diamond, graphite, heavy-mineral sands, lithium, niobium, rare-earth elements (REEs), scandium, tantalum, tungsten, uranium, vanadium and yttrium). Information on uranium exploration activities was included in SNL's survey for the first time in 2007. The USGS data

summarize exploration site data collected for more than 80 minerals and materials, with a focus on base metals, diamond and precious metals. The USGS analyzed available information to assess the level of exploration activity in 2017 and to report trends in mineral exploration activity for the period 2007 through 2017. These analyses identify where mineral exploration is occurring by commodity and region, characterize the intensity of activity that is taking place in each region for selected mineral commodities and determine those factors that most affect changes in exploration activity. (4/23/2018)

[**NEW**] In May, a paper titled "Remote Sensing Analysis of Vegetation at the San Carlos Apache Reservation, AZ and Surrounding Area" is anticipated to be published in the *Journal of Applied Remote Sensing*. The paper summarizes results of mapping vegetation types of importance to the San Carlos Apache Tribe and their management of forestry and fire fuels. Various remote sensing techniques were applied to classify Landsat 8 satellite data, vegetation index data, and digital elevation model data, and were compared against field-gathered data. Findings demonstrate the complexity of vegetation mapping, the importance of recent, high-quality-field data, and the potential for misleading results when insufficient field data are available to support analyses of remote sensing data (4/25/2018).

[**NEW**] In May a new USGS Techniques and Methods publication entitled "User's Guide for MapMark4GUI—A Graphical User Interface for the MapMark4 R Package" will be available online from the USGS Publications Warehouse. MapMark4GUI is an R graphical user interface (GUI) developed by the USGS to support user implementation of the MapMark4 R statistical software package. MapMark4 was developed by the USGS to implement probability calculations for simulating undiscovered mineral resources in quantitative mineral resource assessments. The GUI provides an easy-to-use tool to input data, run simulations, and format output results for the MapMark4 package. (4/24/2018)

[**NEW**] In May/June a new USGS paper entitled "A Review of Elemental Trends in Comprehensive Criticality Studies" has been submitted for publication in the journal *Resources Policy*. There have been many lists of critical elements released by a variety of stakeholders. But reviews of this literature have generally focused on methodological differences. Our work compares the results (what elements are consistently identified as critical) of over 30 comprehensive criticality studies (broadly defined). (4/23/2018)

[**NEW**] In the coming months a new USGS paper entitled "Evaluating relationships between native fishes and habitat in streams affected by oil and natural gas development" will be published in the journal . Fish-habitat relationships were evaluated across stream sites experiencing differing levels of ONG development. Colorado River cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus*) and mottled sculpin (*Cottus bairdii*) presence and abundance were associated with habitat conditions predominantly found in the less disturbed streams, such as higher proportion of weeping willow (*Salix spp.*) and cover, greater stream depths and gravel substrate. Mountain sucker (*Catostomus platyrhynchus*) appeared to be a habitat generalist and was able to persist in a wide range of conditions, including degraded sites, even though abundances were related to catchment percent surface disturbance. (4/23/2018)

# Conversation Contents

## Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/23

### Attachments:

/66. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/23/1.1 Speaking Calendar.xlsx  
/66. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/23/1.2 Speaking Engagement Form.docx

**"Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue Apr 24 2018 16:16:52 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** "Newell, Russell" <russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/23  
**Attachments:** Speaking Calendar.xlsx Speaking Engagement Form.docx

Team,

Attached, please find the latest version of the speaking calendar, updated for the week of 4/23.

The Speaking Engagement Form is attached on here as well; if an upcoming speaking engagement of yours is not on the calendar, please have an assistant in your hallway fill out the form and send it to Russ Newell and me, with Laura Rigas CC'd.

--

Sincerely,

Eli Nachmany  
Speechwriter, Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 706-9285

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)	Location
10/16	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	American Recreation Coalition luncheon	Outdoor recreation	Washington, D.C.
10/16	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	National Congress of American Indians	Upholding trust	Milwaukee, WI
10/17	Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of Intergovernment and External Affairs	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	responsibilities	
10/17	Casey Hammond	DAS	Land and Minerals Management	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Secretary's Top 10 priorities	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Aurelia Skipwith	DAS	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Bureau of Land Management issues	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Mining Association	Conservation	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Austin Ewell	DAS	Water and Science	Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway completion ceremony	Secretary's priorities for hardrock mining and coal	Washington, D.C.
10/19	David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	National Congress of American Indians		Folsom, CA
10/19	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council	Sovereignty	Milwaukee, WI
10/20	Daniel Jorjani	Principal Deputy Solicitor	Office of the Solicitor	CA State Bar Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite	Upholding trust responsibilities	Polson, MT
10/21	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Alaska Federation Natives & Consultation	Regulatory reform	Fish Camp, CA
10/24	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exhibition Keynote Luncheon	Upholding trust responsibilities and Licensed Indian Traders regulations consultation	Anchorage, AK
10/24	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	NM Assn of Conservation Districts	Secure and reliable energy production from the Outer Continental Shelf	Lafayette, LA
10/26	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	DOI-Self Governance Advisory Quarterly Meeting	Public access, forest management, sage grouse	Taos, NM
10/27	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Chemical Association	Reorganization	Washington, D.C.
10/31	Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	ACT-IAC 2017 Executive Leadership Conference	Energy dominance	New Orleans, LA
11/1	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Native American Heritage Month Opening Ceremony	Management efficiency and effectiveness	Williamsburg, VA
						Washington, D.C.

11/1 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Organization of American States 2017		
11/2 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Conservation Champion Award	Award presentation	Washington, D.C.
11/3 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Women in Energy Infrastructure		Washington, D.C.
11/7 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference - DC	Land into trust, tribal courts	Washington, D.C.
11/8 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	NACA 2017-Federal Contracting Policy & Advocacy Conference	Economic development for Native communities	Washington, D.C.
11/8 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Deepwater Operations Conference		Galveston, TX
11/8 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Tribal/Interior Budget Council		Washington, D.C.
11/9 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Alaska Miners Association Convention	Federal policy regarding hard rock resources on federal land	Anchorage, AK
11/9 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Easton Waterfowl Festival Premiere Night	Introducing winner of the duck stamp competition	Easton, MD
11/9 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Heartland Institute America First Energy Conference	American Energy Dominance	Houston, TX
11/14 Andrea Travnicek	Acting Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	International Assn. of Drilling Contractors		Austin, TX
11/14 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	20th William T. Pecora Memorial Remote Sensing Symposium	Application of Earth Observing Data	Sioux Falls, SD
11/14 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Idaho Cattle Association		Sun Valley, ID
11/16 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Luncheon	Western issues	Washington, DC
11/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club Presentation		Grand Junction, CO
11/17 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	"Mvskoke Etlwv: The Muscogee People"	Meet and greet	Washington, DC
11/21 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	TBD: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Gas Infrastructure Exports Initiative	U.S. LNG	Washington, DC
11/28 Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	Commonwealth North Board of Directors meeting	DOI in Alaska	Anchorage, AK
11/28 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting	Invasive species management	Las Vegas, NV
11/29 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs Alaska Providers Conference		Anchorage, AK
11/30 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference		Hood River, OR
			Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls		Ottawa, Canada



11/30 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Environmental Law & Policy Conference	Endangered Species Act	Washington, DC
11/30 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
11/30 Austin Ewell	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
12/4 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Reducing barriers to mineral exploration and development	Sparks/Reno, NV
12/5 John Tahsuda	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	National Indian Gaming Association	Indian trader regulations and proposed land acquisition regulations	Washington, DC
12/6 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Offshore Operators Committee General Mtg		New Orleans, LA
12/6 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Platts Energy Conference		New York, NY
12/6 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Sage-grouse, regulatory reform	Reno, NV
12/6 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Civil Applications Committee, NCAC Reston	Volcanoes and landslide analysis	Reston, VA
12/7 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	State Policy Network		Washington, DC
12/7 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	ALEC: States & Nations Policy Summit	Energy dominance	Nashville, TN
12/7 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	American Exploration and Mining Association	Alaska's mining industry	Reno, NV
12/8 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/8 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/11 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Bayou Industrial Group and South Central Industrial Association	Offshore energy	Gray, LA
12/12 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular Affairs	Island Government Finance Officers (IGFOA) Conference		Maui, HI

12/15 Brenda Burman	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Colorado River Water Users Association Annual Conference		Las Vegas, NV
1/5 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Congressional Sports Foundation		Dallas, TX
1/6 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Dallas Safari Club		Dallas, TX
			Heritage Foundation Overcriminalization Working Group	MBTA M-Opinion	Washington, DC
1/10 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Solicitor	Archery Trade Association		Indianapolis, IN
1/11 Rick May	Senior National Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Sacramento, CA
1/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			
1/17 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Mid Pacific Region Water Users Conference	CA water issues	Reno, NV
1/17 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Federalist Society	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Washington, DC
1/18 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Prior Lake, MN
1/19 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Wild Sheep Foundation Convention		Reno, NV
			Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Panel		
1/19 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Texas Oil and Gas Assn. Legislative and Regulatory Planning Meeting	Federal regulation of oil and gas	Anchorage, AK
1/23 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement			New Orleans, LA
	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary				
1/24 Jason Larrabee		Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Ecological Restoration Business Association Meet and Greet with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	Infrastructure	Washington, DC
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Portland, OR
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention		Portland, OR
1/26 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation			Denver, CO
				Sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros	
1/29 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Society for Range Management		Sparks, NV
				Secretary's position on tribal relations	
1/31 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	DOI Alaska Native relations training		Anchorage, AK
2/1 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	2018 Power and Energy Ski Conference		Deer Valley, UT
			Federal Delegation Meeting - House Committee on Natural Resources		
2/2 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Close Up Foundation (USET)	Panel with students	Salt Lake City, UT
2/5 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)		Washington, DC
2/6 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			Washington, DC
				Streamline and improve the listing and ruling process of at-risk species	
2/6 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	Fish and Wildlife Service	Forest Landowners Association Board of Directors Meeting		Washington, DC

2/8 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Indian Gaming Conference	Fee-to-trust under the Trump administration Interior priorities and accomplishments	Valley Center, CA
2/8 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Texas Public Policy Foundation Western Caucus Foundation House Staff Policy		Austin, TX
2/9 Todd Willens 2/12 John Tahsuda	Assistant Deputy Secretary Acting Asst. Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary Indian Affairs	Planning Retreat State of Indian Nations		Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 Dan Smith	Acting Director	National Park Service	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Brian Steed	Deputy Director	Bureau of Land Management	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Cally Younger 2/13 John Tahsuda	Counselor Acting Asst. Secretary	Bureau of Land Management Indian Affairs	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails National Congress of American Indians 23rd Annual National Indian Women's	Protect the Great Lakes and Relationship to DOI Departmental Budget	Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	"Supporting Each Other Honoring Lunch"		Washington, DC
2/14 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Great Lakes Environmental Summit		Washington, DC
2/17 Aurelia Skipwith 2/19 Steve Wackowski	Deputy Asst. Secretary Senior Advisor for Alaska Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Office of the Secretary	Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Birthday Celebration Meet Alaska Conference and Tradeshow		Washington, DC Anchorage, AK
2/20 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Native American Child Safety Act (NACSA)		Phoenix, AZ
2/21 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Guidelines		Albuquerque, NM
2/22 Jason Funes	Special Assistant Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary		FreedomWorks		Oxon Hill, MD
2/22 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and		Miami, FL
2/22 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Conference	Western water issues	Reno, NV

2/22 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	South Dakota Chamber of Commerce	Tourism through National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges	Pierre, SD
2/22 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Insular and International Affairs	Coral Reef Task Force		Washington, DC
2/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/1 Steve Wackowski	Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference		Anchorage, AK
3/1 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Indian Trust Asset Reform Act		Portland, OR
3/1 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/5 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement		Regulators roundtable: Oil and gas industry governance	
3/5 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	CERAWeek		Houston, TX
3/6 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	National Ground Water Association, Irrigation Association & Water Quality Association		Washington, DC
3/7 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	American Sheep Industry Association			Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Policy, Management & Budget	CXO Fellows Event (Chief Financial Officers Council)		Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Coal Council	What's next for Interior	Clearwater Beach, FL
3/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Caucus Foundation		
3/9 Ryan Nichols	Advisor	Water and Science		Proctor Creek Urban Waters projects in the Atlanta area	Tempe, AZ
3/14 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Proctor Creek Celebration of Success		Atlanta, GA
3/15 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	Faegre Baker Daniels Energy & Environment Symposium		Washington, DC
3/15 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Interstate Council on Water Policy		Arlington, VA
3/15 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs		Cross Boundary Implications for Pre-Border Prevention and Post-Border Mitigation of Invasive Species	
3/18 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Governors Association Western Working Lands		Denver, CO
3/26 Rick May	Senior National Adviser for Recreation	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
			World Water Forum Brasilia		Brazil
			American Sportfishing Association	Recreation and fishing	Crystal City, VA

3/28 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Scotia Howard Weil 47th Annual Energy Conference		New Orleans, LA
3/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	North American Wildlife and Resources Conference	Initiatives with invasive species	Norfolk, VA
3/28 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Quarterly Self-Governance Consultation, Sharee Freeman		Washington, DC
3/29 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference		Norfolk, VA
4/3 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Wind Finance Meeting		New York, NY
4/4 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum		Princeton, NJ
4/4 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Bakken Federal Executives Group	DOI energy policy	N/A (Conference Call)
4/5 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council	Promotion of sport fishing and boating to increase participation	Washington, DC
4/5 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Center for Growth and Opportunity	Public land management	Las Vegas, NV
4/6 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association's 43rd Annual Indian Law Conference	Indian Child Welfare Act Panel	Scottsdale, AZ
4/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	National Water Resources Association		Washington, DC
4/9 TBD	TBD	TBD	National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Legislative Summit		Washington, DC
4/10 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	"Tuesday Morning Group" - Virginia Institute for Public Policy	Interior energy portfolio	Richmond, VA
4/10 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation	Federal Offshore Oil & Gas Leasing & Development	New Orleans, LA
4/10 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management		Sheperdstown, WV
4/12 Alan Mikkelsen	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Reclamation	Klamath Water Users Association Annual Meeting		Klamath Falls, OR
4/12 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
4/13 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Kate MacGregor	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)		Washington, DC

4/16 Ben Cassidy	Senior Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Council of Snowmobile Associations	Motorized access Administration's energy policy strategy	Washington, DC
4/16 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Northern California Power Agency Conference		Washington, DC
4/17 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Flag Day		American Samoa
David Palumbo and			National Association of Clean Water Agencies		
4/17 Gray Payne	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Board of Directors		Washington, DC
4/17 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	BLM National Project Support Team Meeting	Infrastructure	Phoenix, AZ
4/18 Austin Ewell	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	HayWired Rollout		Berkeley, CA
	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary		National Indian Gaming Association Annual Membership Meeting		
4/18 John Tahsuda		Indian Affairs			Las Vegas, NV
		Office of Surface Mining	Virginia Coal and Energy Alliance's Annual		
4/19 Tucker Davis	Advisor	Reclamation and Enforcement	Arbor Day Celebration		Vansant, VA

OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Yes - drafted	?		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed	Members of the Nat'l Mining Association	
	Open Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
	Open	MT tribal leaders	Sonja Twoleggings (406) 252-2550
Yes - drafted	?	Environmental lawyers	
	Open	AK tribal leaders	Alaska Federation Nation (907) 274-3611
	Open	Oil and gas industry	
Yes - drafted	?		
	?	Tribal	
	Closed	Chemical plant managers from LA Federal and state government/private government contractors	
	Open		
	?		

	Open ?	Energy industry, state and federal	
	?		
	?		
	Open		
	?		
Yes	Open unless objections	Mining industry	
	Open	Local residents	
Yes	?		
	Closed		
	Open ?	Scientists, engineers, students Idaho ranchers	
Yes - drafted	Closed	Congressional members	
	Open ?	Oil and gas industry	
TBD Yes	TBD	TBD	
	Closed	Board of Directors, staff Federal and state government rangeland weeds experts	Slade Franklin, (307) 777-6585
	?		
	Open	OR water users	
	Closed	Representatives of Mexico, Canada, and US governments	



Reviewed	Closed		
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	?	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?	Various tribal leaders	
	Closed	Offshore industry and oil and gas	
	?	Energy industry, federal and state officials.	
	Open		
	Closed		
	Closed	Leaders of the State Policy Network	
	Closed	State representatives and stakeholders	
	Open	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?		
	?		
	Open	Members of the oil and gas community, local business leaders	
	Closed		

Yes Yes	Open	Colorado River water users
	?	CSF/DSC members
	?	DSC members
Yes	Closed	
	Open	Retailers
	?	Tribal leaders
		Northern and Central CA water
	Open	issues
	?	Law students and Fed Soc
	?	members
	?	Tribal leaders
	?	
	?	
	Closed	
		Agency officials, mitigation
	One trade	bankers, investors, Congressional
	publication	members/staff
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	
	Closed	
	Closed	USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USGS, and BSEE
	Open (limited)	
	Open (local)	Tribal
	?	Tribal
	Closed	FLA Board of Directors

	?	Tribal
Yes	?	
Yes	Closed ?	House Western Caucus Staff Tribal
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	? Open	Interior and Agriculture employees Tribal leaders
	?  Open	Tribal Federal officials, environmental NGOs, local governments, business groups Local community members, elected officials, others interested in the legacy of Frederick Douglass
	Open Open	Industry
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal
Yes	Closed	FreedomWorks volunteers
	?	Tribal
	Open	Western water users

Yes	Closed	
	?	Members of the Coral Reef Task Force
	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
	Open	Officials from the region
	?	Tribal leaders
Yes	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
		International group of senior level energy industry executives and government regulators
	Closed	
	Closed	
	Closed	CXO Fellows
Yes	?	Industry
	?	Western Caucus Foundation members
	?	
	?	
	Closed	Agency officials
Yes	Open	Policy experts, managers
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	Forum attendees
		Retailers/manufacturers in the fishing industry
	?	

Closed	
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
?	Tribal
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
Open	Offshore wind industry
Open	Industry, trade associations
?	
Closed	Council members
Closed	Academics and students
?	FedBar Organizations, Law
Open	Students
	NWRA members and water users
?	2,000 members of the organization
Closed	Statewide public policy groups and stakeholders
Closed	Lawyers, landmen, regulators
Open	Conservation agency officials from U.S., Mexico, and Canada
Open	Irrigated agriculture
?	Tribal
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	

	Closed	Snowmobile Assn. members
Yes	Closed	Public power officials
	?	?
	Closed	NACWA Board of Directors
	?	Team members
	Open	General public, state and local partners, other stakeholders
	?	Tribal
	Open	300 sixth grade students, federal and state agencies

# Conversation Contents

## Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/16

### Attachments:

/67. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/16/1.1 Speaking Calendar.xlsx  
/67. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/16/1.2 Speaking Engagement Form.docx

**"Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed Apr 18 2018 15:44:35 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** "Newell, Russell" <russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/16  
**Attachments:** Speaking Calendar.xlsx Speaking Engagement Form.docx

Team,

Attached, please find the latest version of the speaking calendar, updated for the week of 4/16.

The Speaking Engagement Form is attached on here as well; if an upcoming speaking engagement of yours is not on the calendar, please have an assistant in your hallway fill out the form and send it to Russ Newell and me, with Laura Rigas CC'd.

--

Sincerely,

Eli Nachmany  
Speechwriter, Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 706-9285

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)
4/16	Ben Cassidy	Senior Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Council of Snowmobile Associations	Motorized access
4/16	Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Northern California Power Agency Conference	Administration's energy policy strategy
4/17	Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Flag Day	
	David Palumbo and Gray			National Association of Clean Water Agencies Board of Directors	
4/17	Payne	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	BLM National Project Support Team Meeting	Infrastructure
4/17	James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary		
4/18	Austin Ewell	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	HayWired Rollout	
		Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary		National Indian Gaming Association Annual Membership Meeting	
4/18	John Tahsuda		Indian Affairs	Virginia Coal and Energy Alliance's Annual Arbor Day Celebration	
4/19	Tucker Davis	Advisor	Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement	National Outdoor Recreation Conference	
4/23	Rick May	Senior Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Texas Association of Business	
4/24	Susan Combs	Acting Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Flag Day	
4/25	Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	2018 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference	
		Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary			
4/25	John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs		
		Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary			
4/26	John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs	Coalition of Large Tribes	Reorganization
				Good Samaritan Protection to Enhance Abandoned Mine Land Cleanup	
4/26	Kathleen Benedetto	Senior Adviser	Bureau of Land Management		
4/30	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Offshore Technology Conference	
4/30	Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Technology Conference	
5/3	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Offshore Technology Conference	
		Acting Deputy Solicitor for Land Resources		National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference	
5/11	Cally Younger		Office of the Solicitor	15th Annual Stewardship Partnership Meeting - Southern Company and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	
5/16	Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks		



Location	OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Washington, DC	Yes	Closed	Snowmobile Assn. members	
Washington, DC American Samoa		Closed ?	Public power officials ?	
Washington, DC		Closed	NACWA Board of Directors	
Phoenix, AZ		?	Team members	
Berkeley, CA		Open	General public, state and local partners, other stakeholders	
Las Vegas, NV		?	Tribal	
Vansant, VA		Open	300 sixth grade students, federal and state agencies	
Burlington, VT		?		
Texas		?		
American Samoa		?		
Albuquerque, NM		?	Tribal	
Albuquerque, NM		?	Tribal	
Golden, CO (Colorado School of Mines)		?	Federal agencies, Congressional, state agencies, industry	
Houston, TX		Open	Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector	
Houston, TX		Open	Industry, trade associations, government, academia	
Houston, TX		Open	Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector	
Louisville, KY		Open	Ecosystem banking and related markets	
Biloxi, MS		Closed		

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)	Location
10/16	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	American Recreation Coalition luncheon	Outdoor recreation	Washington, D.C.
10/16	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	National Congress of American Indians	Upholding trust	Milwaukee, WI
10/17	Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of Intergovernment and External Affairs	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	responsibilities	
10/17	Casey Hammond	DAS	Land and Minerals Management	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Secretary's Top 10 priorities	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Aurelia Skipwith	DAS	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Bureau of Land Management issues	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Mining Association	Conservation	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Austin Ewell	DAS	Water and Science	Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway completion ceremony	Secretary's priorities for hardrock mining and coal	Washington, D.C.
10/19	David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	National Congress of American Indians		Folsom, CA
10/19	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council	Sovereignty	Milwaukee, WI
10/20	Daniel Jorjani	Principal Deputy Solicitor	Office of the Solicitor	CA State Bar Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite	Upholding trust responsibilities	Polson, MT
10/21	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Alaska Federation Natives & Consultation	Regulatory reform	Fish Camp, CA
10/24	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exhibition Keynote Luncheon	Upholding trust responsibilities and Licensed Indian Traders regulations consultation	Anchorage, AK
10/24	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	NM Assn of Conservation Districts	Secure and reliable energy production from the Outer Continental Shelf	Lafayette, LA
10/26	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	DOI-Self Governance Advisory Quarterly Meeting	Public access, forest management, sage grouse	Taos, NM
10/27	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Chemical Association	Reorganization	Washington, D.C.
10/31	Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	ACT-IAC 2017 Executive Leadership Conference	Energy dominance	New Orleans, LA
11/1	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Native American Heritage Month Opening Ceremony	Management efficiency and effectiveness	Williamsburg, VA
						Washington, D.C.

11/1 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Organization of American States 2017		
11/2 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Conservation Champion Award	Award presentation	Washington, D.C.
11/3 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Women in Energy Infrastructure		Washington, D.C.
11/7 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference - DC	Land into trust, tribal courts	Washington, D.C.
11/8 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	NACA 2017-Federal Contracting Policy & Advocacy Conference	Economic development for Native communities	Washington, D.C.
11/8 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Deepwater Operations Conference		Galveston, TX
11/8 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Tribal/Interior Budget Council		Washington, D.C.
11/9 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Alaska Miners Association Convention	Federal policy regarding hard rock resources on federal land	Anchorage, AK
11/9 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Easton Waterfowl Festival Premiere Night	Introducing winner of the duck stamp competition	Easton, MD
11/9 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Heartland Institute America First Energy Conference	American Energy Dominance	Houston, TX
11/14 Andrea Travnicek	Acting Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	International Assn. of Drilling Contractors		Austin, TX
11/14 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	20th William T. Pecora Memorial Remote Sensing Symposium	Application of Earth Observing Data	Sioux Falls, SD
11/14 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Idaho Cattle Association		Sun Valley, ID
11/16 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Luncheon	Western issues	Washington, DC
11/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club Presentation		Grand Junction, CO
11/17 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	"Mvskoke Etlwv: The Muscogee People"	Meet and greet	Washington, DC
11/21 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	TBD: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Gas Infrastructure Exports Initiative	U.S. LNG	Washington, DC
11/28 Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	Commonwealth North Board of Directors meeting	DOI in Alaska	Anchorage, AK
11/28 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting	Invasive species management	Las Vegas, NV
11/29 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs Alaska Providers Conference		Anchorage, AK
11/30 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference		Hood River, OR
			Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls		Ottawa, Canada

11/30 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Environmental Law & Policy Conference	Endangered Species Act	Washington, DC
11/30 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
11/30 Austin Ewell	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
12/4 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Reducing barriers to mineral exploration and development	Sparks/Reno, NV
12/5 John Tahsuda	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	National Indian Gaming Association	Indian trader regulations and proposed land acquisition regulations	Washington, DC
12/6 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Offshore Operators Committee General Mtg		New Orleans, LA
12/6 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Platts Energy Conference		New York, NY
12/6 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Sage-grouse, regulatory reform	Reno, NV
12/6 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Civil Applications Committee, NCAC Reston	Volcanoes and landslide analysis	Reston, VA
12/7 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	State Policy Network		Washington, DC
12/7 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	ALEC: States & Nations Policy Summit	Energy dominance	Nashville, TN
12/7 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	American Exploration and Mining Association	Alaska's mining industry	Reno, NV
12/8 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/8 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/11 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Bayou Industrial Group and South Central Industrial Association	Offshore energy	Gray, LA
12/12 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular Affairs	Island Government Finance Officers (IGFOA) Conference		Maui, HI

12/15 Brenda Burman	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Colorado River Water Users Association Annual Conference		Las Vegas, NV
1/5 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Congressional Sports Foundation		Dallas, TX
1/6 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Dallas Safari Club		Dallas, TX
			Heritage Foundation Overcriminalization Working Group	MBTA M-Opinion	Washington, DC
1/10 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Solicitor	Archery Trade Association		Indianapolis, IN
1/11 Rick May	Senior National Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Sacramento, CA
1/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			
1/17 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Mid Pacific Region Water Users Conference	CA water issues	Reno, NV
1/17 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Federalist Society	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Washington, DC
1/18 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Prior Lake, MN
1/19 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Wild Sheep Foundation Convention		Reno, NV
			Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Panel		
1/19 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Texas Oil and Gas Assn. Legislative and Regulatory Planning Meeting	Federal regulation of oil and gas	Anchorage, AK
1/23 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement			New Orleans, LA
	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary				
1/24 Jason Larrabee		Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Ecological Restoration Business Association Meet and Greet with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	Infrastructure	Washington, DC
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Portland, OR
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention		Portland, OR
1/26 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation			Denver, CO
				Sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros	
1/29 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Society for Range Management		Sparks, NV
				Secretary's position on tribal relations	
1/31 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	DOI Alaska Native relations training		Anchorage, AK
2/1 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	2018 Power and Energy Ski Conference		Deer Valley, UT
			Federal Delegation Meeting - House Committee on Natural Resources		
2/2 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Close Up Foundation (USET)	Panel with students	Salt Lake City, UT
2/5 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)		Washington, DC
2/6 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			Washington, DC
				Streamline and improve the listing and ruling process of at-risk species	
2/6 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	Fish and Wildlife Service	Forest Landowners Association Board of Directors Meeting		Washington, DC

2/8 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Indian Gaming Conference	Fee-to-trust under the Trump administration Interior priorities and accomplishments	Valley Center, CA
2/8 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Texas Public Policy Foundation Western Caucus Foundation House Staff Policy		Austin, TX
2/9 Todd Willens 2/12 John Tahsuda	Assistant Deputy Secretary Acting Asst. Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary Indian Affairs	Planning Retreat State of Indian Nations		Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 Dan Smith	Acting Director	National Park Service	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Brian Steed	Deputy Director	Bureau of Land Management	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Cally Younger 2/13 John Tahsuda	Counselor Acting Asst. Secretary	Bureau of Land Management Indian Affairs	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails National Congress of American Indians 23rd Annual National Indian Women's "Supporting Each Other Honoring Lunch"	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs		Protect the Great Lakes and Relationship to DOI Departmental Budget	Washington, DC
2/14 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Great Lakes Environmental Summit		Washington, DC
2/17 Aurelia Skipwith 2/19 Steve Wackowski	Deputy Asst. Secretary Senior Advisor for Alaska Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Office of the Secretary	Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Birthday Celebration Meet Alaska Conference and Tradeshow		Washington, DC Anchorage, AK
2/20 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Native American Child Safety Act (NACSA)		Phoenix, AZ
2/21 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Guidelines		Albuquerque, NM
2/22 Jason Funes	Special Assistant Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary		FreedomWorks		Oxon Hill, MD
2/22 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and Conference		Miami, FL
2/22 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation		Western water issues	Reno, NV

2/22 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	South Dakota Chamber of Commerce	Tourism through National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges	Pierre, SD
2/22 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Insular and International Affairs	Coral Reef Task Force		Washington, DC
2/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/1 Steve Wackowski	Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference		Anchorage, AK
3/1 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Indian Trust Asset Reform Act		Portland, OR
3/1 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
3/5 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement		Regulators roundtable: Oil and gas industry governance	
3/5 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	CERAWeek		Houston, TX
3/6 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	National Ground Water Association, Irrigation Association & Water Quality Association		Washington, DC
3/7 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	American Sheep Industry Association			Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Policy, Management & Budget	CXO Fellows Event (Chief Financial Officers Council)		Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Coal Council	What's next for Interior	Clearwater Beach, FL
3/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Caucus Foundation		
3/9 Ryan Nichols	Advisor	Water and Science		Proctor Creek Urban Waters projects in the Atlanta area	Tempe, AZ
3/14 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Proctor Creek Celebration of Success		Atlanta, GA
3/15 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	Faegre Baker Daniels Energy & Environment Symposium		Washington, DC
3/15 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Interstate Council on Water Policy		Arlington, VA
3/15 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs		Cross Boundary Implications for Pre-Border Prevention and Post-Border Mitigation of Invasive Species	
3/18 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Governors Association Western Working Lands		Denver, CO
3/26 Rick May	Senior National Adviser for Recreation	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
			World Water Forum Brasilia		Brazil
			American Sportfishing Association	Recreation and fishing	Crystal City, VA

3/28 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Scotia Howard Weil 47th Annual Energy Conference		New Orleans, LA
3/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	North American Wildlife and Resources Conference	Initiatives with invasive species	Norfolk, VA
3/28 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Quarterly Self-Governance Consultation, Sharee Freeman		Washington, DC
3/29 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference		Norfolk, VA
4/3 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Wind Finance Meeting		New York, NY
4/4 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum		Princeton, NJ
4/4 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Bakken Federal Executives Group	DOI energy policy	N/A (Conference Call)
4/5 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council	Promotion of sport fishing and boating to increase participation	Washington, DC
4/5 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Center for Growth and Opportunity	Public land management	Las Vegas, NV
4/6 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association's 43rd Annual Indian Law Conference	Indian Child Welfare Act Panel	Scottsdale, AZ
4/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	National Water Resources Association		Washington, DC
4/9 TBD	TBD	TBD	National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Legislative Summit		Washington, DC
4/10 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	"Tuesday Morning Group" - Virginia Institute for Public Policy	Interior energy portfolio	Richmond, VA
4/10 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation	Federal Offshore Oil & Gas Leasing & Development	New Orleans, LA
4/10 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management		Sheperdstown, WV
4/12 Alan Mikkelsen	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Reclamation	Klamath Water Users Association Annual Meeting		Klamath Falls, OR
4/12 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Mashantucket, CT
4/13 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	2018 National Ocean Industries Association		Washington, DC
4/13 Kate MacGregor	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)		Washington, DC



OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Yes - drafted	?		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed	Members of the Nat'l Mining Association	
	Open Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
	Open	MT tribal leaders	Sonja Twoleggins (406) 252-2550
Yes - drafted	?	Environmental lawyers	
	Open	AK tribal leaders	Alaska Federation Nation (907) 274-3611
	Open	Oil and gas industry	
Yes - drafted	?		
	?	Tribal	
	Closed	Chemical plant managers from LA Federal and state government/private government contractors	
	Open		
	?		

	Open ?	Energy industry, state and federal	
	?		
	?		
	Open		
	?		
Yes	Open unless objections	Mining industry	
	Open	Local residents	
Yes	?		
	Closed		
	Open ?	Scientists, engineers, students Idaho ranchers	
Yes - drafted	Closed	Congressional members	
	Open ?	Oil and gas industry	
TBD Yes	TBD	TBD	
	Closed	Board of Directors, staff Federal and state government	
	Open	rangeland weeds experts	Slade Franklin, (307) 777-6585
	?		
	Open	OR water users	
	Closed	Representatives of Mexico, Canada, and US governments	

Reviewed	Closed		
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	?	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?	Various tribal leaders	
	Closed	Offshore industry and oil and gas	
	?	Energy industry, federal and state officials.	
	Open		
	Closed		
	Closed	Leaders of the State Policy Network	
	Closed	State representatives and stakeholders	
	Open	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?		

?			
?			
Open	Members of the oil and gas community, local business leaders		
Closed			

Yes Yes	Open	Colorado River water users
	?	CSF/DSC members
	?	DSC members
Yes	Closed	
	Open	Retailers
	?	Tribal leaders
		Northern and Central CA water
	Open	issues
	?	Law students and Fed Soc
	?	members
	?	Tribal leaders
	?	
	Closed	
	One trade publication	Agency officials, mitigation bankers, investors, Congressional members/staff
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	
	Closed	
	Closed	USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USGS, and BSEE
	Open (limited)	
	Open (local)	Tribal
	?	Tribal
	Closed	FLA Board of Directors

	?	Tribal
Yes	?	
Yes	Closed ?	House Western Caucus Staff Tribal
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	? Open	Interior and Agriculture employees Tribal leaders
	?  Open	Tribal Federal officials, environmental NGOs, local governments, business groups Local community members, elected officials, others interested in the legacy of Frederick Douglass
	Open Open	Industry
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal
Yes	Closed	FreedomWorks volunteers
	?	Tribal
	Open	Western water users

Yes	Closed	
	?	Members of the Coral Reef Task Force
	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
	Open	Officials from the region
	?	Tribal leaders
Yes	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
		International group of senior level energy industry executives and government regulators
	Closed	
	Closed	
	Closed	
Yes	Closed	CXO Fellows
	?	Industry
	?	Western Caucus Foundation members
	?	
	?	
Yes	Closed	Agency officials
	Open	Policy experts, managers
	?	Tribal leaders
Yes	Open	Forum attendees
		Retailers/manufacturers in the fishing industry
	?	

Closed	
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
?	Tribal
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
Open	Offshore wind industry
Open	Industry, trade associations
?	
Closed	Council members
Closed	Academics and students
?	FedBar Organizations, Law
Open	Students
	NWRA members and water users
?	2,000 members of the organization
Closed	Statewide public policy groups and stakeholders
Closed	Lawyers, landmen, regulators
Open	Conservation agency officials from U.S., Mexico, and Canada
Open	Irrigated agriculture
?	Tribal
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	Trade association members
Closed	

# Conversation Contents

## Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/9

### Attachments:

/68. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/9/1.1 Speaking Calendar.xlsx  
/68. Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/9/1.2 Speaking Engagement Form.docx

**"Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed Apr 11 2018 16:05:51 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** "Newell, Russell" <russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Speaking Calendar: Week of 4/9  
**Attachments:** Speaking Calendar.xlsx Speaking Engagement Form.docx

Team,

Attached, please find the latest version of the speaking calendar, updated for the week of 4/9.

The Speaking Engagement Form is attached on here as well; if an upcoming speaking engagement of yours is not on the calendar, please have an assistant in your hallway fill out the form and send it to Russ Newell and me, with Laura Rigas CC'd.

--

Sincerely,

Eli Nachmany  
Speechwriter, Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 706-9285



Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)
4/9	Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	National Water Resources Association	
4/9	TBD	TBD	TBD	National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Legislative Summit	
4/10	Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	"Tuesday Morning Group" - Virginia Institute for Public Policy	Interior energy portfolio
4/10	Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation	Federal Offshore Oil & Gas Leasing & Development
4/10	Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management	
4/12	Alan Mikkelsen	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Reclamation	Klamath Water Users Association Annual Meeting	
4/12	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations	
4/13	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	2018 National Ocean Industries Association	
4/13	Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	2018 National Ocean Industries Association	
4/13	Kate MacGregor	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)	National Ocean Industries Association	
4/16	Ben Cassidy	Senior Deputy Director	Land and Minerals Management	American Council of Snowmobile Associations	Motorized access
4/16	Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Northern California Power Agency Conference	Administration's energy policy strategy
4/17	Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Office of the Secretary	Flag Day	
4/17	James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	BLM National Project Support Team Meeting	Infrastructure
4/18	Austin Ewell	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	HayWired Rollout	
4/18	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	National Indian Gaming Association Annual Membership Meeting	
4/23	Rick May	Senior Advisor	Indian Affairs	National Outdoor Recreation Conference	
4/24	Susan Combs	Acting Assistant Secretary	Office of the Secretary	Texas Association of Business	
4/25	Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Flag Day	
4/25	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	2018 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference	
4/26	John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary	Indian Affairs	Coalition of Large Tribes	Reorganization
4/26	Kathleen Benedetto	Senior Adviser	Indian Affairs	Good Samaritan Protection to Enhance Abandoned Mine Land Cleanup	
4/26	Kathleen Benedetto	Senior Adviser	Bureau of Land Management		

4/30	Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Technology Conference
5/4	Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Key West Community College Commencement
5/16	Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife and Parks	15th Annual Stewardship Partnership Meeting - Southern Company and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Location	OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Washington, DC	Yes	Open	NWRA members and water users	
Washington, DC		?	2,000 members of the organization	
Richmond, VA		Closed	Statewide public policy groups and stakeholders	
New Orleans, LA		Closed	Lawyers, landmen, regulators	
Sheperdstown, WV		Open	Conservation agency officials from U.S., Mexico, and Canada	
Klamath Falls, OR		Open	Irrigated agriculture	
Mashantucket, CT		?	Tribal	
Washington, DC		Closed	Trade association members	
Washington, DC		Closed	Trade association members	
Washington, DC		Closed		
Washington, DC		Closed	Snowmobile Assn. members	
Washington, DC		Closed	Public power officials	
American Samoa		?	?	
Phoenix, AZ		?	Team members	
Berkeley, CA		Open	General public, state and local partners, other stakeholders	
Las Vegas, NV		?	Tribal	
Burlington, VT		?		
Texas		?		
American Samoa		?		
Albuquerque, NM		?	Tribal	
Albuquerque, NM		?	Tribal	
Golden, CO (Colorado School of Mines)		?	Federal agencies, Congressional, state agencies, industry	

Houston, TX	Open	Industry, trade associations, government, academia
Key West, FL	Closed	
Biloxi, MS	Closed	

Date	Speaker	Title	Bureau/Agency	Event/Organization	Topic (if applicable)	Location
10/16	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	American Recreation Coalition luncheon	Outdoor recreation	Washington, D.C.
10/16	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	National Congress of American Indians	Upholding trust	Milwaukee, WI
10/17	Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of Intergovernment and External Affairs	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	responsibilities	
10/17	Casey Hammond	DAS	Land and Minerals Management	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Secretary's Top 10 priorities	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Aurelia Skipwith	DAS	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum	Bureau of Land Management issues	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	National Mining Association	Conservation	Washington, D.C.
10/17	Austin Ewell	DAS	Water and Science	Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway completion ceremony	Secretary's priorities for hardrock mining and coal	Washington, D.C.
10/19	David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	National Congress of American Indians		Folsom, CA
10/19	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council	Sovereignty	Milwaukee, WI
10/20	Daniel Jorjani	Principal Deputy Solicitor	Office of the Solicitor	CA State Bar Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite	Upholding trust responsibilities	Polson, MT
10/21	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Indian Affairs	Alaska Federation Natives & Consultation	Regulatory reform	Fish Camp, CA
10/24	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exhibition Keynote Luncheon	Upholding trust responsibilities and Licensed Indian Traders regulations consultation	Anchorage, AK
10/24	Todd Willens	Asst. Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	NM Assn of Conservation Districts	Secure and reliable energy production from the Outer Continental Shelf	Lafayette, LA
10/26	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	DOI-Self Governance Advisory Quarterly Meeting	Public access, forest management, sage grouse	Taos, NM
10/27	Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Louisiana Chemical Association	Reorganization	Washington, D.C.
10/31	Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	ACT-IAC 2017 Executive Leadership Conference	Energy dominance	New Orleans, LA
11/1	John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Native American Heritage Month Opening Ceremony	Management efficiency and effectiveness	Williamsburg, VA
						Washington, D.C.

11/1 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Organization of American States 2017		
11/2 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Conservation Champion Award	Award presentation	Washington, D.C.
11/3 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Women in Energy Infrastructure		Washington, D.C.
11/7 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference - DC	Land into trust, tribal courts	Washington, D.C.
11/8 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	NACA 2017-Federal Contracting Policy & Advocacy Conference	Economic development for Native communities	Washington, D.C.
11/8 John Tahsuda	PDAS	Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs	Deepwater Operations Conference		Galveston, TX
11/8 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Tribal/Interior Budget Council		Washington, D.C.
11/9 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Alaska Miners Association Convention	Federal policy regarding hard rock resources on federal land	Anchorage, AK
11/9 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Easton Waterfowl Festival Premiere Night	Introducing winner of the duck stamp competition	Easton, MD
11/9 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Heartland Institute America First Energy Conference	American Energy Dominance	Houston, TX
11/14 Andrea Travnicek	Acting Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	International Assn. of Drilling Contractors		Austin, TX
11/14 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	20th William T. Pecora Memorial Remote Sensing Symposium	Application of Earth Observing Data	Sioux Falls, SD
11/14 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Idaho Cattle Association		Sun Valley, ID
11/16 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Luncheon	Western issues	Washington, DC
11/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club Presentation		Grand Junction, CO
11/17 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	"Mvskoke Etlwv: The Muscogee People"	Meet and greet	Washington, DC
11/21 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	TBD: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Gas Infrastructure Exports Initiative	U.S. LNG	Washington, DC
11/28 Scott Cameron	PDAS	Policy, Management & Budget	Commonwealth North Board of Directors meeting	DOI in Alaska	Anchorage, AK
11/28 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting	Invasive species management	Las Vegas, NV
11/29 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs Alaska Providers Conference		Anchorage, AK
11/30 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference		Hood River, OR
			Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls		Ottawa, Canada

11/30 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Environmental Law & Policy Conference	Endangered Species Act	Washington, DC
11/30 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
11/30 Austin Ewell	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Water and Science	Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition	Panel discussion	Anaheim, CA
12/4 Kathy Benedetto	Senior Advisor	Bureau of Land Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Reducing barriers to mineral exploration and development	Sparks/Reno, NV
12/5 John Tahsuda	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	National Indian Gaming Association	Indian trader regulations and proposed land acquisition regulations	Washington, DC
12/6 Kate MacGregor	Acting Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Offshore Operators Committee General Mtg		New Orleans, LA
12/6 Vincent DeVito	Energy Policy Counselor	Office of the Secretary	Platts Energy Conference		New York, NY
12/6 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	American Exploration and Mining Association	Sage-grouse, regulatory reform	Reno, NV
12/6 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Civil Applications Committee, NCAC Reston	Volcanoes and landslide analysis	Reston, VA
12/7 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	State Policy Network		Washington, DC
12/7 Jason Funes	Special Assistant	Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs	ALEC: States & Nations Policy Summit	Energy dominance	Nashville, TN
12/7 Steve Wackowski	Alaska Advisor	Office of the Secretary	American Exploration and Mining Association	Alaska's mining industry	Reno, NV
12/8 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/8 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable	Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West	Washington, DC
12/11 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	Bayou Industrial Group and South Central Industrial Association	Offshore energy	Gray, LA
12/12 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular Affairs	Island Government Finance Officers (IGFOA) Conference		Maui, HI

12/15 Brenda Burman	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Colorado River Water Users Association Annual Conference		Las Vegas, NV
1/5 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Congressional Sports Foundation		Dallas, TX
1/6 David Bernhardt	Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Dallas Safari Club		Dallas, TX
			Heritage Foundation Overcriminalization Working Group	MBTA M-Opinion	Washington, DC
1/10 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Solicitor	Archery Trade Association		Indianapolis, IN
1/11 Rick May	Senior National Advisor	Office of the Secretary	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Sacramento, CA
1/16 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			
1/17 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Mid Pacific Region Water Users Conference	CA water issues	Reno, NV
1/17 Gary Lawkowski	Counselor	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Federalist Society	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Washington, DC
1/18 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Prior Lake, MN
1/19 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Wild Sheep Foundation Convention		Reno, NV
			Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Panel		
1/19 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Texas Oil and Gas Assn. Legislative and Regulatory Planning Meeting	Federal regulation of oil and gas	Anchorage, AK
1/23 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement			New Orleans, LA
	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary				
1/24 Jason Larrabee		Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	Ecological Restoration Business Association Meet and Greet with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	Infrastructure	Washington, DC
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations		Portland, OR
1/25 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention		Portland, OR
1/26 Alan Mikkelsen	Deputy Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation			Denver, CO
				Sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros	
1/29 Casey Hammond	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Society for Range Management		Sparks, NV
				Secretary's position on tribal relations	
1/31 Steve Wackowski	Senior Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	DOI Alaska Native relations training		Anchorage, AK
2/1 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	2018 Power and Energy Ski Conference		Deer Valley, UT
			Federal Delegation Meeting - House Committee on Natural Resources		
2/2 James Cason	Associate Deputy Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary	Close Up Foundation (USET)	Panel with students	Salt Lake City, UT
2/5 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)		Washington, DC
2/6 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs			Washington, DC
				Streamline and improve the listing and ruling process of at-risk species	
2/6 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	Fish and Wildlife Service	Forest Landowners Association Board of Directors Meeting		Washington, DC



2/8 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Western Indian Gaming Conference	Fee-to-trust under the Trump administration Interior priorities and accomplishments	Valley Center, CA
2/8 Doug Domenech	Assistant Secretary	Insular and International Affairs	Texas Public Policy Foundation Western Caucus Foundation House Staff Policy		Austin, TX
2/9 Todd Willens 2/12 John Tahsuda	Assistant Deputy Secretary Acting Asst. Secretary	Office of the Deputy Secretary Indian Affairs	Planning Retreat State of Indian Nations		Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 Dan Smith	Acting Director	National Park Service	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Brian Steed	Deputy Director	Bureau of Land Management	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails	Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)	Washington, DC
2/13 Cally Younger 2/13 John Tahsuda	Counselor Acting Asst. Secretary	Bureau of Land Management Indian Affairs	FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails National Congress of American Indians 23rd Annual National Indian Women's	Protect the Great Lakes and Relationship to DOI Departmental Budget	Washington, DC Washington, DC
2/13 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	"Supporting Each Other Honoring Lunch"		Washington, DC
2/14 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Great Lakes Environmental Summit		Washington, DC
2/17 Aurelia Skipwith 2/19 Steve Wackowski	Deputy Asst. Secretary Senior Advisor for Alaska Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Office of the Secretary	Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Birthday Celebration Meet Alaska Conference and Tradeshow		Washington, DC Anchorage, AK
2/20 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Native American Child Safety Act (NACSA)		Phoenix, AZ
2/21 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Guidelines		Albuquerque, NM
2/22 Jason Funes	Special Assistant Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary		FreedomWorks		Oxon Hill, MD
2/22 John Tahsuda	Secretary	Indian Affairs	Consultation Part 151 Regulations Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and		Miami, FL
2/22 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Conference	Western water issues	Reno, NV

2/22 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Asst. Secretary	Fish, Wildlife, & Parks	South Dakota Chamber of Commerce	Tourism through National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges	Pierre, SD
2/22 Marshall Critchfield	Advisor	Insular and International Affairs	Coral Reef Task Force	Implementation of ISAC recommendations	Washington, DC
2/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting		Washington, DC
3/1 Steve Wackowski	Advisor for Alaska	Office of the Secretary	Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference		Anchorage, AK
3/1 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Indian Trust Asset Reform Act	Implementation of ISAC recommendations Regulators roundtable: Oil and gas industry governance	Portland, OR
3/1 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting		Washington, DC
3/5 Scott Angelle	Director	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	CERAWeek		Houston, TX
3/5 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	National Ground Water Association, Irrigation Association & Water Quality Association	What's next for Interior	Washington, DC
3/6 Aurelia Skipwith	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Fish, Wildlife & Parks	American Sheep Industry Association		Washington, DC
3/7 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	CXO Fellows Event (Chief Financial Officers Council)		Washington, DC
3/7 Todd Wynn	Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	American Coal Council	Proctor Creek Urban Waters projects in the Atlanta area	Clearwater Beach, FL
3/9 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Western Caucus Foundation		Tempe, AZ
3/9 Ryan Nichols	Advisor	Water and Science	Proctor Creek Celebration of Success		Atlanta, GA
3/14 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Faegre Baker Daniels Energy & Environment Symposium	Cross Boundary Implications for Pre-Border Prevention and Post-Border Mitigation of Invasive Species	Washington, DC
3/15 Tim Petty	Assistant Secretary	Water and Science	Interstate Council on Water Policy		Arlington, VA
3/15 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	Western Governors Association		Denver, CO
3/15 John Tahsuda	Acting Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Working Lands Consultation	Recreation and fishing	Mashantucket, CT
3/18 Brenda Burman	Commissioner	Bureau of Reclamation	Part 151 Regulations		Brazil
3/26 Rick May	Senior National Adviser for Recreation	Office of the Secretary	World Water Forum Brasilia		
			American Sportfishing Association		Crystal City, VA

3/28 Joe Balash	Assistant Secretary	Land and Minerals Management	Scotia Howard Weil 47th Annual Energy Conference		New Orleans, LA
3/28 Scott Cameron	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Policy, Management & Budget	North American Wildlife and Resources Conference	Initiatives with invasive species	Norfolk, VA
3/28 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Quarterly Self-Governance Consultation, Sharee Freeman		Washington, DC
3/29 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference		Norfolk, VA
4/3 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Offshore Wind Finance Meeting		New York, NY
4/4 Walter Cruickshank	Acting Director	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum		Princeton, NJ
4/4 Vincent DeVito	Counselor for Energy Policy	Office of the Secretary	Bakken Federal Executives Group	DOI energy policy	N/A (Conference Call)
4/5 Greg Sheehan	Principal Deputy Director	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council	Promotion of sport fishing and boating to increase participation	Washington, DC
4/5 Tim Williams	Deputy Director	Intergovernmental and External Affairs	Center for Growth and Opportunity	Public land management	Las Vegas, NV
4/6 John Tahsuda	Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary	Indian Affairs	Federal Bar Association's 43rd Annual Indian Law Conference	Indian Child Welfare Act Panel	Scottsdale, AZ

OCO Remarks?	Press	Audience	Point of Contact
Yes - drafted	?		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed		
	Closed	Members of the Nat'l Mining Association	
	Open		
	Open	General assembly/tribal leaders	Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767
Yes - drafted	Open	MT tribal leaders	Sonja Twoleggins (406) 252-2550
	?	Environmental lawyers	
	Open	AK tribal leaders	Alaska Federation Nation (907) 274-3611
Yes - drafted	Open	Oil and gas industry	
	?		
	?	Tribal	
	Closed	Chemical plant managers from LA Federal and state government/private government contractors	
	Open		
	?		

	Open ?	Energy industry, state and federal	
	?		
	?		
	Open		
	?		
Yes	Open unless objections	Mining industry	
	Open	Local residents	
Yes	?		
	Closed		
	Open ?	Scientists, engineers, students Idaho ranchers	
Yes - drafted	Closed	Congressional members	
	Open ?	Oil and gas industry	
TBD Yes	TBD	TBD	
	Closed	Board of Directors, staff Federal and state government	
	Open	rangeland weeds experts	Slade Franklin, (307) 777-6585
	?		
	Open	OR water users	
	Closed	Representatives of Mexico, Canada, and US governments	

Reviewed	Closed		
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	Open	CA public water agency leadership	
	?	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?	Various tribal leaders	
	Closed	Offshore industry and oil and gas	
	?	Energy industry, federal and state officials.	
	Open		
	Closed		
	Closed	Leaders of the State Policy Network	
	Closed	State representatives and stakeholders	
	Open	Mining industry	Pat Heywood, pheywood@miningamerica.com
	?		

?			
?			
Open	Members of the oil and gas community, local business leaders		
Closed			

	Open	Colorado River water users
Yes	?	CSF/DSC members
Yes	?	DSC members
	Closed	
Yes	Open	Retailers
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	Northern and Central CA water issues
	?	Law students and Fed Soc members
	?	Tribal leaders
	?	
	Closed	
	One trade publication	Agency officials, mitigation bankers, investors, Congressional members/staff
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	
	Closed	
	Closed	USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USGS, and BSEE
	Open (limited)	
	Open (local)	Tribal
	?	Tribal
	Closed	FLA Board of Directors

	?	Tribal
Yes	?	
Yes	Closed ?	House Western Caucus Staff Tribal
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	?	Interior and Agriculture employees
	? Open	Interior and Agriculture employees Tribal leaders
	?  Open	Tribal Federal officials, environmental NGOs, local governments, business groups Local community members, elected officials, others interested in the legacy of Frederick Douglass
	Open Open	Industry
	?	Tribal
	?	Tribal
Yes	Closed	FreedomWorks volunteers
	?	Tribal
	Open	Western water users



Yes	Closed	
	?	Members of the Coral Reef Task Force
	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
	Open	Officials from the region
	?	Tribal leaders
Yes	Open	Federal agency staff, governors, associations
		International group of senior level energy industry executives and government regulators
	Closed	
	Closed	
	Closed	CXO Fellows
Yes	?	Industry
	?	Western Caucus Foundation members
	?	
	?	
	Closed	Agency officials
Yes	Open	Policy experts, managers
	?	Tribal leaders
	Open	Forum attendees
		Retailers/manufacturers in the fishing industry
	?	

Closed	
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
?	Tribal
Open	Agencies, Committees, private sector
Open	Offshore wind industry
Open	Industry, trade associations
?	
Closed	Council members
Closed	Academics and students
?	FedBar Organizations, Law Students

# Conversation Contents

## NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review

### Attachments:

/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/1.1 Final FY18 Committee Tracking - NPS - from DOI (1).xlsx  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/1.2 DIV G INTERIOR SOM FY18 OMNI.OCR (3).pdf  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/1.3 Interior (3).pdf  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/2.1 Final FY18 Committee Tracking - NPS - from DOI (1).xlsx  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/2.2 DIV G INTERIOR SOM FY18 OMNI.OCR (3).pdf  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/2.3 Interior (3).pdf  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/3.1 Final FY18 Committee Tracking - NPS - from DOI (1).xlsx  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/3.2 DIV G INTERIOR SOM FY18 OMNI.OCR (3).pdf  
/69. NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review/3.3 Interior (3).pdf

**"Bowron, Jessica" <jessica\_bowron@nps.gov>**

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**From:** "Bowron, Jessica" <jessica\_bowron@nps.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed Apr 04 2018 06:16:53 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Foster, Maureen" <maureen\_foster@ios.doi.gov>, Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
Lena McDowall <Lena\_McDowall@nps.gov>, "Paul (Dan) Smith" <paul\_smith@nps.gov>, Randal Bowman <randal\_bowman@ios.doi.gov>, Jennifer Werner <jennifer\_werner@nps.gov>, Christine Powell <chris\_powell@nps.gov>, Rick Obernesser <rick\_obernesser@nps.gov>  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review  
Final FY18 Committee Tracking - NPS - from DOI (1).xlsx  
**Attachments:** DIV G INTERIOR SOM FY18 OMNI.OCR (3).pdf Interior (3).pdf

Attached is the NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review. I've also included the Interior bill and report sections for reference.

We have a meeting scheduled for tomorrow at 1 pm to discuss this. If you have any questions before then, please let me know.

Jessica Bowron  
Comptroller  
National Park Service  
(o) 202-513-7138

**"Combs, Susan" <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Combs, Susan" <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed Apr 04 2018 08:24:41 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Cameron, Scott" <scott\_cameron@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review  
Final FY18 Committee Tracking - NPS - from DOI (1).xlsx  
**Attachments:** DIV G INTERIOR SOM FY18 OMNI.OCR (3).pdf Interior (3).pdf

lets discuss

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bowron, Jessica** <[jessica\\_bowron@nps.gov](mailto:jessica_bowron@nps.gov)>  
Date: Wed, Apr 4, 2018 at 8:16 AM  
Subject: NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review  
To: "Foster, Maureen" <[maureen\\_foster@ios.doi.gov](mailto:maureen_foster@ios.doi.gov)>, Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
Cc: Lena McDowall <[Lena\\_McDowall@nps.gov](mailto:Lena_McDowall@nps.gov)>, "Paul (Dan) Smith" <[paul\\_smith@nps.gov](mailto:paul_smith@nps.gov)>, Randal Bowman <[randal\\_bowman@ios.doi.gov](mailto:randal_bowman@ios.doi.gov)>, Jennifer Werner <[jennifer\\_werner@nps.gov](mailto:jennifer_werner@nps.gov)>, Christine Powell <[chris\\_powell@nps.gov](mailto:chris_powell@nps.gov)>, Rick Obernesser <[rick\\_obernesser@nps.gov](mailto:rick_obernesser@nps.gov)>

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Susan Combs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1-202-208-4482

**"Combs, Susan" <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Combs, Susan" <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed Apr 04 2018 08:25:25 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Thomas Garcia <[thomas\\_garcia@nps.gov](mailto:thomas_garcia@nps.gov)>, Joy Nicholopoulos <[joy\\_nicholopoulos@fws.gov](mailto:joy_nicholopoulos@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review  
Final FY18 Committee Tracking - NPS - from DOI (1).xlsx  
**Attachments:** DIV G INTERIOR SOM FY18 OMNI.OCR (3).pdf Interior

(3).pdf

please print

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bowron, Jessica** <[jessica\\_bowron@nps.gov](mailto:jessica_bowron@nps.gov)>

Date: Wed, Apr 4, 2018 at 8:16 AM

Subject: NPS FY 2018 operating plan for ASFWP review

To: "Foster, Maureen" <[maureen\\_foster@ios.doi.gov](mailto:maureen_foster@ios.doi.gov)>, Susan Combs  
<[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>

Cc: Lena McDowall <[Lena\\_McDowall@nps.gov](mailto:Lena_McDowall@nps.gov)>, "Paul (Dan) Smith" <[paul\\_smith@nps.gov](mailto:paul_smith@nps.gov)>, Randal Bowman <[randal\\_bowman@ios.doi.gov](mailto:randal_bowman@ios.doi.gov)>, Jennifer Werner <[jennifer\\_werner@nps.gov](mailto:jennifer_werner@nps.gov)>, Christine Powell <[chris\\_powell@nps.gov](mailto:chris_powell@nps.gov)>, Rick Obernesser <[rick\\_obernesser@nps.gov](mailto:rick_obernesser@nps.gov)>

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Susan Combs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1-202-208-4482

	Funding Control Level	Comprehensive Table National Park Service (Dollars in Thousands)	2017	2018	2018	2018	Delta	2018	2018	Changes to the 2018 Request			Amount Without Specified Expression (\$)	
			Actual	Request	Committee Support Table	Enacted	From 2018 Request	2018 Requested Changes Accepted	Amount (\$)	Additions/Reductions to the 2018 Request	Report, Statute or Unspecified	Change from Request (\$)		Comments
BUREAU		NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TOTAL	2,969,948	2,589,947	3,212,162	3,212,162	622,215		+10,881			+622,215	1,130	
OMB ACCOUNT	Statutory	Operation of the National Park System (010-24-1036)	2,425,018	2,225,485	2,477,969	2,477,969	252,484		+10,688			+252,484	1,130	-
TREASURY ACCOUNT	Statutory	Operation of the National Park System (14-1036)	2,425,018	2,225,485	2,477,969	2,477,969	252,484		+10,688			+252,484	1,130	-
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Park Management	2,244,286	2,045,913	2,298,397	2,298,397	252,484		+11,848			+252,484	1,130	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Resource Stewardship	328,575	301,928	334,437	334,483	32,555		+3,982			+32,555	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Natural Resource Stewardship	217,883	204,626	0	222,810	18,184		+2,625			+18,184		-
								Fixed Costs	+2,625					
										Rejection of Park Reduction (AB)	R	+14,769		Conserving Our Land & Water
										Rejection of Landscape Restoration Reduction (AB)	R	+1,500		Conserving Our Land & Water
										Rejection of NR Project Reduction (AB)	R	+715		Conserving Our Land & Water
										Increase for Quagga & Zebra Mussel (N)	R	+1,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Increase for Cave & Karst (N)	R	+200		Conserving Our Land & Water
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Cultural Resource Stewardship	100,660	87,922	0	101,641	13,719		+1,290			+13,719		-
								Fixed Costs	+1,290			+6,719		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Rejection of Cultural Resources Project Reduction (AB)	R	+7,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
PROGRAM ELEMENT	Statutory	Everglades Restoration and Research	10,032	9,380	0	10,032	652		+67			+652	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+67			+719		Conserving Our Land & Water
										Unspecified Decrease	S	-67		Conserving Our Land & Water
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Visitor Services	260,061	223,785	255,683	254,954	31,169		+3,580			+31,169	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Interpretation and Education	244,552	210,464	0	240,724	30,260		+3,374			+30,260	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+3,374			+18,533		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Rejection of Interpretation/Education Project Reduction (AB)	R	+500		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Rejection of Youth Reduction (AB)	R	+5,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Rejection of Volunteer Reduction (AB)	R	+4,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Rejection of Nat Cap Perl Arts Reduc (AB)	R	+2,227		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Commercial Services	15,509	13,321	0	14,230	909		+206			+909	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+206			+909		Generating Revenue & Utilizing Our Natural Resources
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Park Protection	367,112	338,198	362,226	365,099	26,901		+583			+26,901	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Law Enforcement and Protection	331,169	305,870	0	330,541	24,671		+241			+24,671	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+4,441			+19,671		Protecting Our People & the Border
								Eliminate Inauguration Funding	-4,200			+5,000		Protecting Our People & the Border
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Health and Safety	35,943	32,328	0	34,558	2,230		+342			+2,230	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+342			+2,230		Protecting Our People & the Border
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Facility Operations Maintenance	780,782	685,899	810,019	811,279	125,380		-3,583			+125,380	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Facility Operations	326,764	311,712	0	333,803	22,091		+3,726			+22,091		-
								Fixed Costs	+3,726			+21,705		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Rejection of Partnership Project Reduction (AB)	R	+386		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Facility Maintenance	454,018	374,187	0	477,476	103,289		-7,309			+103,289		-
								Fixed Costs	+2,401			+25,189		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
								Eliminate Flex Park Funding	-9,710			+13,903		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Rejection of Park Reduction (AB)	R	+27,347		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Rejection of Env Mgt Project Reduction (AB)	R	+1,500		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Rejection of Storm Damage Reduction (AB)	R	+350		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Increase Repair/Rehab (N)	S	+10,000		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Increase Cyclic Maintenance (N)	R	+15,000		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Increase Maintenance Planning (N)	R	+10,000		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Park Support	507,756	496,103	536,032	532,582	36,479		+7,286			+36,479	1,130	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Management, Policy and Development	167,098	162,209	0	175,079	12,870		+3,212			+12,870	+1,130	-
								Fixed Costs	+2,132			+11,740		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
								New Units	+1,080			+180	180	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Increase for Natchez NHP Visitor Center (N)	U	+780	780	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										"Made in America" Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee	U	+170	170	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Administrative Support	340,658	333,894	0	357,503	23,609		+4,074			+23,609	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+4,074			+23,609		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	External Administrative Costs	180,732	179,572	179,572	179,572	0		-1,160			0	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	External Administrative Costs	180,732	179,572	179,572	179,572	0		-1,160			0	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Employee Compensation Payments	25,357	23,031	0	23,031	0	Fixed Costs	-2,326			0	0	NA
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Unemployment Compensation Payments	19,272	16,447	0	16,447	0	Fixed Costs	-2,825			0	0	NA
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Centralized IT Costs	7,960	7,945	0	7,945	0	Fixed Costs	-15			0	0	NA
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Telecommunications	9,238	9,220	0	9,220	0	Fixed Costs	-18			0	0	NA
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Postage	2,866	2,861	0	2,861	0	Fixed Costs	-5			0	0	NA
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Space Rental	68,667	68,442	0	68,442	0	Fixed Costs	-225			0	0	NA
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Departmental Program Charges	47,372	51,626	0	51,626	0	Fixed Costs	+4,254			0	0	NA
OMB ACCOUNT	Statutory	Centennial Challenge (010-24-2645)	20,000	14,971	23,000	23,000	8,029					+8,029	0	-
TREASURY ACCOUNT	Statutory	Centennial Challenge (14-2645)	20,000	14,971	23,000	23,000	8,029					+8,029	0	-
										Rejection of Centennial Challenge Program Decrease (AB)	S	+5,029	0	Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Centennial Challenge Program Increase (N)	S	+3,000	0	Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
OMB ACCOUNT	Statutory	National Recreation and Preservation (010-24-1042)	62,638	37,001	63,638	63,638	26,637					+26,637	0	-

			2017	2018	2018	2018	Delta	2018	2018	Changes to the 2018 Request				
	Funding Control Level	Comprehensive Table National Park Service (Dollars in Thousands)	Actual	Request	Committee Support Table	Enacted	From 2018 Request	2018 Requested Changes Accepted	Amount (\$)	Additions/Reductions to the 2018 Request	Report, Statute or Unspecified	Change from Request (\$)	Amount Without Specified Expression (\$)	Comments
TREASURY ACCOUNT	Statutory	National Recreation and Preservation (14-1042)	62,638	37,001	63,638	63,638	26,637					+26,637	0	-
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Recreation Programs	589	0	0	0	0	Proposed Transfer	-589			0	0	-
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Natural Programs	13,581	12,089	14,170	14,170	2,081		+772			+2,081	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Natural Programs	13,581	12,089	14,170	14,170	2,081		+772			+2,081	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance	10,033	9,062	0	10,033	971	Fixed Costs	+148	Rejection of RTCA Program Decrease (AB)	R	+971	0	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
PROGRAM ELEMENT		National Natural Landmarks	660	566	0	660	94	Fixed Costs	+7	Rejection of NNL Program Decrease (AB)	R	+94	0	Conserving Our Land & Water
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Hydropower Recreation Assistance	868	848	0	868	20	Fixed Costs	+14	Rejection of Hydropower Program Decrease (AB)	R	+20	0	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Chesapeake Gateways and Trails	2,020	1,024	0	2,020	996	Fixed Costs	+14	Rejection of Chesapeake Program Decrease (AB)	R	+996	0	Conserving Our Land & Water
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Federal Lands to Parks	0	589	0	589	0	Proposed Transfer	+589			0	0	NA
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Cultural Programs	24,562	22,408	25,062	25,062	2,654		+236			+2,654	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Cultural Programs	24,562	22,408	25,062	25,062	2,654		+236			+2,654	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		National Register Programs	16,833	15,518	0	16,833	1,315	Fixed Costs	+217	Rejection of National Register Program Decrease (AB)	R	+1,315	0	Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		National Center for Preservation Technology and Training	1,969	1,734	0	1,969	235	Fixed Costs	+19	Rejection of NCPTT Program Decrease (AB)	R	+235	0	Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Grants	1,657	1,654	0	1,657	3			Rejection of NAGPRA Program Decrease (AB)	R	+3	0	Fulfilling Our Trust & Insular Responsibilities
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Japanese American Confinement Site Grants	2,905	1,000	0	2,905	1,905			Rejection of JACS Program Decrease (AB)	R	+1,905	0	Fulfilling Our Trust & Insular Responsibilities
PROGRAM ELEMENT		American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants	1,198	500	0	1,198	698			Rejection of ABPP Planning Program Decrease (AB)	R	+698	0	Conserving Our Land & Water
PROGRAM ELEMENT		American Indian and Native Hawaiian Art and Culture Grants			500	500				Increase for Indian & Native Hawaiian Grants (N)	R	+500		Fulfilling Our Trust & Insular Responsibilities
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Grants Administration	0	2,002	0	0	-2,002			Rejection of Transfer	R	-2,002	0	Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Environmental Compliance and Review	433	385	433	433	48	Fixed Costs	+6	Rejection of Program Decrease	R	+48	0	Conserving Our Land & Water
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Grants Administration	2,004	0	2,004	2,004	2,004		+32			+2,004	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Grants Administration	2,004	0	2,004	2,004	2,004		+32			+2,004	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Historic Preservation Fund Administration	1,563	0	0	1,563	1,563	Fixed Costs	+25	Rejection of Subactivity Transfer (AB)	R	+1,563	0	Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Native American Graves Protection Grants Administration	191	0	0	191	191	Fixed Costs	+3	Rejection of Subactivity Transfer (AB)	R	+191	0	Fulfilling Our Trust & Insular Responsibilities
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants Administration	90	0	0	90	90	Fixed Costs	+1	Rejection of Subactivity Transfer (AB)	R	+90	0	Fulfilling Our Trust & Insular Responsibilities
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Administration	160	0	0	160	160	Fixed Costs	+3	Rejection of Subactivity Transfer (AB)	R	+160	0	Conserving Our Land & Water
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	International Park Affairs	1,648	1,310	1,648	1,648	338		+18			+338	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	International Park Affairs	1,648	1,310	1,648	1,648	338		+18			+338	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Office of International Affairs	972	971	0	972	1	Fixed Costs	+18	Rejection of OIA Program Decrease (AB)	R	+1	0	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Southwest Border Resource Protection Program	676	339	0	676	337			Rejection of SW Border Program Decrease (AB)	R	+337	0	Conserving Our Land & Water
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Heritage Partnership Programs	19,821	809	20,321	20,321	19,512		+11			+19,512	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Heritage Partnership Programs	19,821	809	20,321	20,321	19,512		+11			+19,512	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Commissions and Grants	18,839	0	0	19,339	19,339			Rejection of NHA Program Decrease (AB)	R	+18,839	0	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Administrative Support	982	809	0	982	173	Fixed Costs	+11	Increase for NHA Tier I & Tier II (N)	R	+500		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
OMB ACCOUNT	Statutory	Historic Preservation Fund (010-24-5140)	80,910	51,100	96,910	96,910	45,810			Rejection of Admin Support Program Decrease (AB)	R	+173	0	Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
TREASURY ACCOUNT	Statutory	Historic Preservation Fund (14-5140)	80,910	51,100	96,910	96,910	45,810					+45,810	0	-
ACTIVITY		Grants-In-Aid	75,910	51,100	83,910	83,910	32,810					+32,810	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Grants-In-Aid to States and Territories	47,925	42,134	48,925	48,925	6,791					+6,791	0	-
										Rejection of SHPO Program Decrease (AB)	R	+5,791		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Increase for SHPO Program (N)	R	+1,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Grants-In-Aid to Indian Tribes	10,485	8,966	11,485	11,485	2,519					+2,519	0	-
										Rejection of THPO Program Decrease (AB)	R	+1,519		Fulfilling Our Trust & Insular Responsibilities
										Increase for THPO Program (N)	R	+1,000		Fulfilling Our Trust & Insular Responsibilities
	Statutory	Historic Revitalization grants			5,000	5,000	5,000			Historic Revitalization Grants Program Increase (N)	S	+5,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
SUB ACTIVITY	Statutory	Grants-in-Aid to Historically Black Colleges & Universitie	4,000	0	5,000	5,000	5,000				S	+5,000	0	-
										Rejection of HBCU Program Decrease (AB)	S	+4,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Increase for HBCU Program (N)	S	+1,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Competitive Grants-in-Aid	13,500	0	13,500	13,500	13,500					+13,500	0	-
										Rejection of Competitive Grant Program Decrease (AB)	R	+13,500		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
ACTIVITY	Statutory	Grants-In-Aid - Save America's Treasures	5,000	0	13,000	13,000	13,000					+13,000	0	-
										Rejection of SAT Program Decrease (AB)	S	+5,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Increase for SAT Program (N)	S	+8,000		Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
OMB ACCOUNT	Statutory	Construction (and Major Maintenance) (010-24-1039)	209,353	226,529	359,704	359,704	133,175					+133,175	0	-
TREASURY ACCOUNT	Statutory	Construction (and Major Maintenance) (14-1039)	209,353	226,529	359,704	359,704	133,175					+133,175	0	-
	Committee Expression	General Program Increase			138,000	0	0							-
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Line Item Construction Projects	131,992	137,011	137,011	264,511	127,500		+5,019			+127,500	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Line Item Construction Projects	131,992	137,011	137,011	264,511	127,500		+5,019			+127,500	0	-

			2017	2018	2018	2018	Delta	2018	2018	Changes to the 2018 Request				
	Funding Control Level	Comprehensive Table National Park Service (Dollars in Thousands)	Actual	Request	Committee Support Table	Enacted	From 2018 Request	2018 Requested Changes Accepted	Amount (\$)	Additions/Reductions to the 2018 Request	Report, Statute or Unspecified	Change from Request (\$)	Amount Without Specified Expression (\$)	Comments
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Line Item Construction Projects	131,992	129,011	0	256,511	127,500	Program Decrease	-2,981	LIC Program Increase (N)	R	+127,500	0	Spread for \$138M - Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Abandoned Mineral Lands Projects	0	4,000	0	4,000	0	Program Increase	+4,000			0	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Demolition and Disposal Projects	0	4,000	0	4,000	0	Program Increase	+4,000			0	0	-
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Special Programs	20,803	20,769	20,769	20,769	0		-34			0	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Emergencies and Unscheduled Projects	3,855	3,848	3,848	3,848	0	Program Decrease	-7			0	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Housing Program	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	0	Fixed Costs	+4			0	0	-
								Program Decrease	-4					-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Dam Safety and Security Program	1,248	1,247	1,247	1,247	0	Fixed Costs	+1			0	0	-
								Program Decrease	-2					-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Equipment Replacement Program	13,500	13,474	13,474	13,474	0	Program Decrease	-26			0	0	-
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Construction Planning	7,966	17,453	12,711	17,061	-392		0			-392	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Line Item Construction Planning	7,966	17,453	12,711	17,061	-392		0			-392	0	-
										Partial Funding of Requested LIC Planning Program Increase	R	-4,742		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										LIC Planning Program Increase (N)	R	+4,350	0	Spread for \$138M - Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Construction Program Management and Operations	36,771	40,656	38,713	44,863	4,207		+509			+4,207	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Construction Program Management and Operations	36,771	40,656	38,713	44,863	4,207		+509			+4,207	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Construction Program Management	2,775	2,649	0	2,775	126	Fixed Costs	+29	Rejection of Const Program Management Decrease (AB)	R	+126	0	Modernizing Our Organization & nrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Denver Service Center Operations	17,780	19,082	0	20,004	922	Fixed Costs	+288			+922	0	-
										Partial Funding of Requested DSC Increase	R	-878		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										DSC Increase (N)	R	+1,800	0	Spread for \$138M - Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Harpers Ferry Center Operations	10,126	9,029	0	10,126	1,097	Fixed Costs	+122	Rejection of Harpers Ferry Center Ops Decrease (AB)	R	+1,097	0	Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Regional Facility Project Support	6,090	9,896	0	11,958	2,062	Fixed Costs	+70			+2,062	0	-
										Partial Funding of Requested Regional Facility Support Increase	R	-2,288		Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
										Regional Facility Project Support Increase (N)	R	+4,350	0	Spread for \$138M - Modernizing Our Organization & Infrastructure
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Management Planning	11,821	10,640	12,500	12,500	1,860		-982			+1,860	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Management Planning	11,821	10,640	12,500	12,500	1,860		-982			+1,860	0	-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Unit Management Plans	5,956	5,363	0	5,363	0	Program Decrease	-665			0	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+72					-
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Special Resources Studies	1,786	1,614	0	3,474	1,860	Fixed Costs	+27	Special Resources Studies Program Increase (N)	R	+1,860	0	Conserving Our Land & Water
PROGRAM ELEMENT		Environmental Impact Planning and Compliance	4,079	3,663	0	3,663	0	Program Decrease	-456			0	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+40					-
OMB ACCOUNT	Statutory	Land Acquisition and State Assistance (010-24-5035)	162,029	26,380	180,941	180,941	154,561		+193			+154,561	0	-
TREASURY ACCOUNT	Statutory	Land Acquisition and State Assistance (14-5035)	162,029	26,380	180,941	180,941	154,561		+193			+154,561	0	-
PRIOR YEAR BA		Cancellation of Prior Year BA	0	0	0	0	0		0			0	0	-
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Aqisition Management	9,679	8,716	9,679	9,679	963		+155			+963	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+155	Rejection of Acquisition Management Decrease (AB)	R	+963	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Conserving Our Land & Water
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Federal Land Acquisition	42,344	14,621	47,256	47,256	32,635					+32,635	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Projects	21,488	0	26,400	26,400	26,400					+26,400	0	-
										Rejection of Acquisition Projects Decrease (AB)		+21,488		Committee Support Table Amount - Conserving Our Land & Water
										Acquisition Projects Increase (N)	R	+4,912	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Conserving Our Land & Water
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Recreational Access	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	2,000					+2,000	0	-
										Rejection of Recreational Access Decrease (AB)	R	+2,000	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Emergencies, Hardships, Relocations	3,928	3,071	3,928	3,928	857					+857	0	-
										Rejection of Emergencies, Unscheduled, Reloc Decrease (AB)	R	+857	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Conserving Our Land & Water
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	Inholdings, Donations and Exchanges	4,928	3,069	4,928	4,928	1,859					+1,859	0	-
										Rejection of Inhold , Donations, Exchanges Decrease (AB)	R	+1,859	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Conserving Our Land & Water
SUB ACTIVITY	Statutory	American Battlefield Protection Program Acquisition Grants	10,000	8,481	10,000	10,000	1,519					+1,519	0	-
										Rejection of ABPP Acquisition Grants Decrease (AB)	S	+1,519	0	Amount is included in Bill Language - Conserving Our Land & Water



			2017	2018	2018	2018	Delta	2018	2018	Changes to the 2018 Request				
	Funding Control Level	Comprehensive Table National Park Service (Dollars in Thousands)	Actual	Request	Committee Support Table	Enacted	From 2018 Request	2018 Requested Changes Accepted	Amount (\$)	Additions/Reductions to the 2018 Request	Report, Statute or Unspecified	Change from Request (\$)	Amount Without Specified Expression (\$)	Comments
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	State Conservation Grants	106,000	0	120,000	120,000	120,000					+120,000	0	-
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	State Conservation Grants - Formula	94,000	0	100,000	100,000	100,000					+100,000	0	-
										Rejection of Formula State Conser Grants Decrease (AB)	R	+94,000	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Formula State Conser Grants Increase (N)	R	+6,000	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
SUB ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	State Conservation Grants - Competitive	12,000	0	20,000	20,000	20,000					+20,000	0	-
										Rejection of Competitive State Conser Grants Decrease (AB)	R	+12,000	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
										Competitive State Conser Grants Increase (N)	R	+8,000		Committee Support Table Amount - Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
ACTIVITY	Committee Expression	State Conservation Grants Administration	4,006	3,043	4,006	4,006	963		+38			+963	0	-
								Fixed Costs	+38	Rejection of State Conser Grants Admin Decrease (AB)	R	+963	0	Committee Support Table Amount - Expanding Outdoor Recreation & Access
OMB ACCOUNT	Committee Expression	Land and Water Conservation Fund (010-84-5005)	-27,930	-28,020	0	0	28,020					+28,020	0	-
TREASURY ACCOUNT	Committee Expression	Land and Water Conservation Fund (14-5005)	-27,930	-28,020	0	0	28,020					+28,020	0	-
RESCISSION OF CONTRACT AUTHORITY		Rescission of Contract Authority	-27,930	-28,020	0	0	28,020					+28,020	0	-
										Rescission of Contract Authority not taken (AB)	S	+28,020	0	Rescission Language was not included in Bill, so Contract Authority was not rescinded

DIVISION G – DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT,  
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

The following statement is an explanation of the effects of Division G, which makes appropriations for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Forest Service, the Indian Health Service, and related agencies for fiscal year 2018.

The joint explanatory statement accompanying this division is approved and indicates congressional intent. Unless otherwise noted, the language set forth in House Report 115-238 carries the same weight as language included in this joint explanatory statement and should be complied with unless specifically addressed to the contrary in this joint explanatory statement. While some language is repeated for emphasis, it is not intended to negate the language referred to above unless expressly provided herein.

In instances where the House report speaks more broadly to policy issues or offers views that are subject to interpretation, such views remain those of the House and are not affirmed by this explanatory statement unless repeated herein. In cases where the House report or this explanatory statement directs the submission of a report, such report is to be submitted to both the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations. Where this explanatory statement refers to the Committees or the Committees on Appropriations, unless otherwise noted, this reference is to the House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies and the Senate Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies.

The Committees direct each department and agency funded in this Act to follow the directions set forth in this Act and the accompanying statement, and not reallocate resources or reorganize activities except as provided herein or otherwise approved by the Committees through the reprogramming process as referenced in this explanatory statement. This explanatory statement addresses only those agencies and accounts for which there is a need for greater explanation than provided in the Act itself. Funding levels for appropriations by account, program, and activity, with comparisons to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level and the fiscal year 2018 budget request, can be found in the table at the end of this division.

Unless expressly stated otherwise, any reference to “this Act” or “at the end of this statement” shall be treated as referring only to the provisions of this division.

*Committee Directives.*—The Department of the Interior and Forest Service are directed to continue the directions included in the Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31) relating to Vacant Grazing Allotments; State Wildlife Data; Bighorn Sheep; Land Grants, Acequias, and Community Ditches; and Public Access.

*Recreation Fee Authority.*—The one-year extension of recreation fee authority for the Department of the Interior and U.S. Forest Service contained in the budget request and included in both fiscal year 2018 House and Senate Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bills was included in the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2018 and Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-56).

*Making Litigation Costs Transparent.*—The Department of the Interior, EPA, and the Forest Service are directed to provide to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, and to make publicly available no later than 60 days after enactment of this Act, detailed Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) fee information as specified in the explanatory statement accompanying Division G of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31).

*White-Nose Syndrome.*—The four Federal land management agencies and the U.S. Geological Survey are expected to continue to prioritize research on, and efforts to address, white-nose syndrome in bats and to work with other Federal, State, and non-governmental partners to implement the North American Bat Monitoring Program.

*Multi-Agency Transparency.*—The Committees support increasing transparency within all agencies of the Department of the Interior, the Forest Service and the Environmental Protection Agency. These agencies are encouraged to disclose costs associated with analyses required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

*Paper Reduction Efforts.*—The Committees urge the Department of the Interior, EPA, Forest Service, and Indian Health Service to work with the Office of Management and Budget to reduce printing and reproduction costs and direct each agency to report to the Committees within 90 days of enactment of this Act on steps being undertaken to achieve this goal and how much each agency expects to save by implementing these measures.

*Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Training.*—The Department of the Interior and the Forest Service shall follow the directive in Senate Report 114-281 regarding ANILCA training for agency employees.

*Transparency of Information.*—The Committees expect that Federal agencies funded under this Act shall, to the extent practicable, clearly state within materials used for advertising or educational purposes that the communication is funded by taxpayer dollars.

*Fleet Management Practices.*—Agencies shall provide supporting documentation on their methods for determining their optimal fleet inventories and justification for any deviation from the General Services Administration’s Federal Property Management Regulations upon request of the Committees. Agency inspectors general shall provide results from audits of fleet management practices and make them publicly available.

*Invasive Species.*—The Department of the Interior is directed to provide a written report to the Committees within 180 days of enactment of this Act, detailing the funds appropriated and expended, actions taken, and outputs achieved for the early detection of and rapid response to invasive species, as prescribed in the National Invasive Species Council Management Plan, 2016-2018.

*Delivery of Reports and Correspondence.*—All reports, correspondence, and reprogramming requests from the agencies to the Committees shall be provided in both physical and electronic formats.

*Youth Partnership Programs.*—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture are encouraged to utilize, where practicable, youth partnership programs like the Public Lands Corps, Youth Conservation Corps, Student Conservation Association, Job Corps and other related partnerships with Federal, State, local, tribal or non-profit groups that serve young adults.

*Land and Water Conservation Fund.*—The agreement includes \$425,000,000 derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for programs consistent with chapter 2003 of title 54 of the United States Code, as identified in the table below.

	FY 2017 Enacted	Budget Request	This Bill
<b>Land and Water Conservation Fund</b>	<b>\$400,000,000</b>	<b>\$64,040,000</b>	<b>\$425,000,000</b>
<b>State, Local and Forest Legacy Programs</b>	<b>211,151,000</b>	<b>11,524,000</b>	<b>224,731,000</b>
National Park Service State Assistance	110,006,000	3,043,000	124,006,000
Coop. Endangered Species Conservation Fund	30,800,000	0	19,638,000
American Battlefield Protection Act	10,000,000	8,481,000	10,000,000
Highlands Conservation Act	10,000,000	0	10,000,000
<b>Forest Legacy Program</b>	<b>62,347,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67,025,000</b>
Rescission	-12,002,000	0	-5,938,000
<b>Federal Land Acquisition</b>	<b>188,849,000</b>	<b>52,516,000</b>	<b>200,269,000</b>
Bureau of Land Management	31,416,000	3,609,000	24,916,000
Fish and Wildlife Service	49,995,000	17,051,000	53,839,000
National Park Service	42,023,000	14,856,000	46,935,000
Forest Service	54,415,000	7,000,000	64,337,000
Department of the Interior Valuation Services	11,000,000	10,000,000	10,242,000

There is bipartisan support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and this agreement includes funding for State assistance and new land acquisition projects. The Committees expect the

agencies to move forward with all projects specifically identified and funded through this agreement and those funded in previous fiscal years; to utilize funding in a timely manner; and to seek Congressional approval for reprogramming unobligated balances if applicable. Agencies are directed to continue their longstanding process of identifying and prioritizing potential Federal land acquisition projects in anticipation of program appropriations as consistent with previous years. Within 30 days of enactment of this Act, each agency is directed to submit to the Committees a prioritized list of projects for fiscal year 2019 consideration. In future years, the agencies are directed to submit their lists within 30 days of the President's budget submission to Congress.

The Committees believe increasing access to our public lands for hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities is important and again include funding for these projects. The Committees expect recreational access projects to be selected based on their role in meeting key recreation needs and the agencies should work with their respective regions, State offices, and/or management units to identify potential projects. The Committees are to be informed about the selection process and how the agencies are meeting the outlined objectives prior to proceeding with projects. Further, the agencies are again directed to include in future budget justifications an explanation of the process used for allocating funds for recreational access in the previous year.

*National Ocean Policy.*—The Committees direct the Department of the Interior to identify by agency and account, and submit no later than 60 days after enactment of this Act, all funding and associated actions in the President's budget submission for fiscal year 2019, proposed for the implementation of the coastal and marine spatial planning and ecosystem-based management components of the National Ocean Policy developed under Executive Order 13547.

## REPROGRAMMING GUIDELINES

The following are the procedures governing reprogramming actions for programs and activities funded in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. The Committees remind the agencies funded in this Act that these reprogramming guidelines are in effect, and must be complied with, until such time as the Committees modify them through bill or report language.

*Definitions.*—“Reprogramming,” as defined in these procedures, includes the reallocation of funds from one budget activity, budget line-item, or program area, to another within any appropriation funded in this Act. In cases where either the House or Senate Committee report displays an allocation of an appropriation below that level, that more detailed level shall be the basis for reprogramming.

For construction, land acquisition, and forest legacy accounts, a reprogramming constitutes the reallocation of funds, including unobligated balances, from one construction, land acquisition, or forest legacy project to another such project.

A reprogramming shall also consist of any significant departure from the program described in the agency's budget justifications. This includes proposed reorganizations, especially those of significant national or regional importance, even without a change in funding. Any change to the organization table presented in the budget justification shall be subject to this requirement.

The Committees are aware that agencies funded by this Act are currently working to implement Executive Order 13781, a Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch, and have included in the fiscal year 2019 budget request a number of significant reorganization proposals for the Committees' consideration. The Committees are also aware of reports that agencies funded by this Act may be weighing additional organizational changes during the remainder of this fiscal year. Agencies are reminded that this agreement continues longstanding General Guidelines for Reprogramming that require agencies funded by this Act to submit reorganization proposals for Committee review prior to their implementation. It is noted that such reprogramming guidelines apply to proposed reorganizations, workforce restructure, reshaping or transfer of functions presented in the budget justifications, or bureau-wide downsizing, especially those of significant national or regional importance, and include closures, consolidations, and relocations of offices, facilities, and laboratories presented in the budget justifications. In addition, no agency shall implement any part of a reorganization that modifies regional or State boundaries for agencies or bureaus that were in effect as of the date of enactment of this Act unless approved consistent with the General Guidelines for Reprogramming procedures specified herein. Any such reprogramming request submitted to the Committees on Appropriations shall include a description of anticipated benefits, including anticipated efficiencies and cost-savings, as well as a description of anticipated personnel impacts and funding changes anticipated to implement the proposal.

*General Guidelines for Reprogramming.—*

(a) A reprogramming should be made only when an unforeseen situation arises, and then only if postponement of the project or the activity until the next appropriation year would result in actual loss or damage.

(b) Any project or activity, which may be deferred through reprogramming, shall not later be accomplished by means of further reprogramming, but instead, funds should again be sought for the deferred project or activity through the regular appropriations process.

(c) Except under the most urgent situations, reprogramming should not be employed to initiate new programs or increase allocations specifically denied or limited by Congress, or to decrease allocations specifically increased by the Congress.

(d) Reprogramming proposals submitted to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations for approval shall be considered approved 30 calendar days after receipt if the Committees have posed no objection. However, agencies will be expected to extend the approval deadline if specifically requested by either Committee.

*Criteria and Exceptions.*—A reprogramming must be submitted to the Committees in writing prior to implementation if it exceeds \$1,000,000 annually or results in an increase or decrease of more than 10 percent annually in affected programs or projects, whichever amount is less, with the following exceptions:

(a) With regard to the tribal priority allocations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), there is no restriction on reprogrammings among these programs. However, the Bureaus shall report on all reprogrammings made during a given fiscal year no later than 60 days after the end of the fiscal year.

(b) With regard to the EPA, the Committees do not require reprogramming requests associated with the States and Tribes Partnership Grants, or up to a cumulative total of \$30,000,000 from carryover balances among the individual program areas delineated in the Environmental Programs and Management account. No funds, however, shall be reallocated from individual Geographic Programs.

*Assessments.*—“Assessment” as defined in these procedures shall refer to any charges, reserves, or holdbacks applied to a budget activity or budget line item for costs associated with general agency administrative costs, overhead costs, working capital expenses, or contingencies.

(a) No assessment shall be levied against any program, budget activity, subactivity, budget line item, or project funded by the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act unless such assessment and the basis therefor are presented to the Committees on Appropriations in the budget justifications and are subsequently approved by the Committees. The explanation for any assessment in the budget justification shall show the amount of the assessment, the activities assessed, and the purpose of the funds.

(b) Proposed changes to estimated assessments, as such estimates were presented in annual budget justifications, shall be submitted through the reprogramming process and shall be subject to the same dollar and reporting criteria as any other reprogramming.

(c) The Committees direct that each agency or bureau which utilizes assessments shall submit an annual report to the Committees which provides details on the use of all funds assessed from any other budget activity, line item, subactivity, or project.

(d) In no case shall contingency funds or assessments be used to finance projects and activities disapproved or limited by Congress, or to finance programs or activities that could be foreseen and included in the normal budget review process.

(e) New programs requested in the budget should not be initiated before enactment of the bill without notification to, and the approval of, the Committees on Appropriations. This restriction applies to all such actions regardless of whether a formal reprogramming of funds is required to begin the program.

*Quarterly Reports.*—All reprogrammings between budget activities, budget line-items, program areas, or the more detailed activity levels shown in this agreement, including those below the monetary thresholds established above, shall be reported to the Committees within 60 days of the end of each quarter and shall include cumulative totals for each budget activity, budget line item, or construction, land acquisition, or forest legacy project.

*Land Acquisitions, Easements, and Forest Legacy.*—Lands shall not be acquired for more than the approved appraised value (as addressed in section 301(3) of Public Law 91-646), unless such acquisitions are submitted to the Committees on Appropriations for approval in compliance with these procedures.

*Land Exchanges.*—Land exchanges, wherein the estimated value of the Federal lands to be exchanged is greater than \$1,000,000, shall not be consummated until the Committees have had a 30-day period in which to examine the proposed exchange. In addition, the Committees shall be provided advance notification of exchanges valued between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.

*Budget Structure.*—The budget activity or line item structure for any agency appropriation account shall not be altered without advance approval of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations.

*Fiscal Year 2019 Process.*—Historically, the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act has not included reprogramming direction in bill language. However, this historical practice is not consistent with the majority of other Appropriations subcommittees' bills. Therefore, the Committees plan to consider including bill language in fiscal year 2019. The agencies are therefore strongly encouraged to work collaboratively with the Committees to develop language in order to avoid any barriers to implementation.

TITLE I – DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MANAGEMENT OF LANDS AND RESOURCES

*Bureau of Land Management Directives.*—The Bureau is reminded of the importance of the directives included in House Report 115-238 not addressed herein, as well as the new directives in this explanatory statement, including the front matter.



The agreement provides \$1,166,043,000 for Management of Lands and Resources. Within this amount, the agreement includes an additional \$50,000,000 for deferred maintenance. The Committees direct that the Bureau provide a report no later than October 1, 2018, on the projects to be funded with this funding. The Committees also note that there is \$5,465,000 in unobligated balances in the Construction appropriation, which was discontinued in fiscal year 2014. To augment the new funds for deferred maintenance, the Bureau is directed to utilize these Construction funds for deferred maintenance projects and to submit a reprogramming request to the Committees, as necessary, to fully obligate the prior year balances in fiscal year 2018.

In addition to the funding allocation table at the end of this explanatory statement, the agreement includes the following instructions:

*Wild Horses and Burros.*—The Committees are extremely disappointed that the Department has failed to provide a comprehensive plan, as directed by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31) to address the fast-rising costs of the Wild Horse and Burro program and overpopulation of wild horses and burros on the range. The failure to address these problems is irresponsible and will result in irreparable damage to the landscape and the welfare of the animals protected by the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. The Committees reiterate their belief that there is no one solution to the problems with this program, and that Congress and the Administration must work together to correct them. Until the Department provides a comprehensive plan and any corresponding legislative proposals to the appropriate authorizing committees, the Committees will maintain the existing prohibitions and reduce the resources available for the program. Reprogramming requests will only be considered for urgent needs. At a minimum, the Committees expect a science-based, detailed plan that 1) reduces the complexity and cost of contracting policies and procedures; 2) eliminates unnecessary environmental reviews; 3) simplifies and expands the use of partnerships and cooperative agreements; 4) identifies statutory and regulatory barriers to implementing the plan; and 5) has the goal of reducing costs while improving the health and welfare of wild horses and burros, and the range. The Committees direct the Department to provide the report within 30 days of enactment of this Act.

*Greater Sage-grouse.*—The agreement provides \$60,000,000 for greater sage-grouse and related sage-steppe conservation activities. This is equal to the amount of base funding provided in fiscal year 2017. The Bureau is encouraged to continue working with States and other interested entities on the existing sage-grouse conservation plans and to improve the condition of the sage-steppe ecosystem.

*Energy and Minerals.*—The agreement provides sufficient funding, within the total made available, to complete the next cluster of legacy well remediation. Congress is closely following the litigation regarding the Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation regulation and directs the Bureau to provide a report on the costs and staffing needs associated with it,

within 30 days of enactment of this Act, to help the Committees prepare for the fiscal year 2019 appropriations process.

*Onshore Orders #3 and #4.*—The Committees are aware that the Bureau is working with affected industries and other interested stakeholders regarding these Orders and expect that the Bureau will expeditiously resolve any remaining issues consistent with current law.

*Required Reports.*—The Bureau is reminded that the reports to Congress required by 42 U.S.C. 15924(e) are due on February 1 annually, and therefore is directed to submit the reports for 2016 and 2017 no later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

*Realty and Ownership Management.*—The agreement provides \$1,000,000 for surveys along the Red River in Oklahoma and Texas.

*Chaco Canyon Regional Management Plan.*—The Bureau is directed to continue its collaborative work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Greater Chaco Canyon area and to maintain current management practices surrounding Chaco Culture National Historical Park while a new resource management planning process to protect cultural and historical resources is completed.

*Rio Puerco Watershed.*—The Bureau is encouraged to continue supporting the Rio Puerco Watershed Committee's work to identify and implement projects to restore the watershed.

*Resource Management Planning.*—The agreement provides \$60,125,000 for resource management planning, which is \$8,000,000 above the fiscal year 2017 level. The Bureau is directed to focus these additional resources on greater sage-grouse, sage-steppe, and other high priority conservation areas.

*Committee Directives.*—The Bureau is directed to continue to follow the directions included in the explanatory statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31) related to Cooperative Efforts in Alaska, Tribal Coordination, and Red River Land Ownership. The Bureau also is directed to comply with the timelines required in the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (ANILCA) and complete environmental reviews, after local consultation and subsistence impact reviews, as it relates to the consideration of the application for the road from Dalton Highway to the Ambler Mining District, as well as continue the directions included in the explanatory statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113) related to placer mining.

*Soda Ash.*—The Committees are concerned about maintaining the United States' global competitiveness in the production of natural soda ash. The United States contains approximately 90 percent of the world's natural soda ash deposits, while many international competitors are producing synthetic soda ash using more energy and generating higher emissions than natural soda ash

production. Therefore, the Committees expect the Bureau to consider using its authority to reduce the Federal royalty rate for soda ash to 2 percent.

### LAND ACQUISITION

The bill provides \$24,916,000 for Land Acquisition. The amounts provided by this bill compared with the budget estimates by activity and project are shown in the table below, listed in priority order pursuant to the project list received for fiscal year 2018. Further instructions are contained under the Land and Water Conservation Fund heading in the front of this explanatory statement.

The Committees note that almost none of the fiscal year 2017 land acquisition funding for the Bureau has been spent through the first quarter of fiscal year 2018, and are concerned about delays in project completions. The Committees expect all projects, particularly those in project areas identified by Congress in this report and in previous fiscal years, to be completed as expeditiously as possible.

State	Project	This Bill	
ID	Upper Snake/South Fork Snake ACEC/SRMA		\$1,800,000
OR	North Umpqua Wild and Scenic River		1,500,000
CA	Mojave Trails National Monument		1,400,000
WY	North Platte River SRMA		4,000,000
NM	Rio Grande del Norte National Monument		900,000
ID	Salmon River SRMA		700,000
UT	Red Cliffs National Conservation Area		3,000,000
	Subtotal, Line Item Projects		13,300,000
		Budget Request	This Bill
	Recreational Access	0	8,000,000
	Emergencies, Hardships, and Inholdings	1,613,000	1,616,000
	Acquisition Management	1,996,000	2,000,000
	Total, BLM Land Acquisition	3,609,000	24,916,000

### OREGON AND CALIFORNIA GRANT LANDS

The agreement provides \$106,985,000 for Oregon and California Grant Lands, to be distributed as displayed in the funding allocation table at the end of this explanatory statement.

## RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

The agreement provides \$10,000,000 to be derived from public lands receipts and Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act lands grazing receipts.

## SERVICE CHARGES, DEPOSITS, AND FORFEITURES

The agreement provides an indefinite appropriation estimated to be \$24,595,000 for Service Charges, Deposits, and Forfeitures.

## MISCELLANEOUS TRUST FUNDS

The agreement provides an indefinite appropriation estimated to be \$24,000,000 for Miscellaneous Trust Funds.

## UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The bill provides \$1,279,002,000 for Resource Management. All programs and activities, including youth programs and cooperative recovery grants, are funded at the amounts proposed in the budget request to the Congress unless otherwise specified below or in the table at the end of this division. The Service is expected to comply with the instructions and requirements at the beginning of this division, in addition to the following:

*Endangered Species Act (ESA).*—The Committees support and reiterate the guidance and directives beginning on page 12 of House Report 115-238, aimed at improving and increasing collaboration with States and other partners in all stages of ESA implementation. Such collaboration ensures lasting conservation success and upholds the integrity of the ESA, which is premised upon the Federal Government working with the States and other partners to recover species and subsequently remove Federal protections.

As the Service indicated in its fiscal year 2017 budget request, “Given the growing number of listed species— limited resources force the Recovery Program to make difficult tradeoffs among these activities including 5-year reviews, developing recovery plans, implementing recovery actions, delisting and downlisting, all of which are necessary to achieve recovery.” Such tradeoffs have led to backlogs of 837 species (53 percent) without a current 5-year review, and 49 species awaiting downlisting or delisting, and have contributed to a common sentiment that, once a species is put on the list, it doesn’t

come off. Such sentiment has made for reluctant State and local partners, adding further strain to the Service's budget and making recovery more difficult. Though the Service is to be commended for having made progress on these backlogs in recent years, it cannot eliminate these backlogs without additional help.

Flexibilities already inherent in the ESA allow the Service to collaborate and benefit from partner expertise and on-the-ground conservation, and the Service, to its credit, already does a considerable amount of that in some regions. But the Committees also recognize that several States and non-governmental partners have indicated a willingness to increase their involvement when the Federal Government is a willing and equal partner. The aim of this fiscal year 2018 appropriation is twofold: 1) to foster a more open, transparent, and collaborative ESA process; and 2) to begin to shift the workload by incentivizing increased involvement by States and other partners in activities such as species status assessments, and recovery planning and implementation, so the Service can prioritize the ESA responsibilities that are inherently Federal.

*Ecological Services.*—The agreement provides \$247,825,000 for programs and activities within Ecological Services, as discussed below.

*Listing.*—The agreement provides \$18,818,000 for status assessments, listings, critical habitat determinations, and related activities. Bill language funding limitations are consolidated under one cap.

The Committees urge the Service to avoid entering into any multi-species settlement agreement unless the State and local governments where the species are located are a party to that agreement.

The Service is urged to continue to follow the guidance contained in House Report 114-170 regarding the yellow-billed cuckoo.

The Service is directed to develop a plan to improve transparency of the underlying data it uses to make determinations for species listings and de-listing activities before the end of fiscal year 2018, including details on how the Service will publish data and materials used in listing determinations on the Internet and improve what is currently available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and the Service website.

The Committees expect the Service to work with the States to develop a more reasonable policy whereby the Service's regulatory assurance criteria include responsible land management commitments by private landowners, as described in further detail in House Report 115-238.

The Committees are concerned that the Service has not fully incorporated traditional Tribal knowledge in its implementation of the ESA. When appropriate, the Committees expect the Service to make every effort to incorporate traditional knowledge in ESA decisions. The Committees also expect the Service to engage in additional outreach to Tribal governments in circumstances where traditional knowledge may provide valuable information, including for species like the northern sea otter. The

Service should brief the Committees on its efforts regarding traditional knowledge within 60 days of enactment of this Act.

*Planning and Consultation.*—The agreement provides \$105,579,000 for project permitting and consultation activities. A program increase of \$2,500,000 is included to avoid permitting delays and to achieve compliance with other statutes, and should be apportioned in accordance with workload needs nationwide rather than by region. Funding for all other program elements within this subactivity are restored to the fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, including \$4,000,000 for Gulf Coast restoration. Because the Committees have provided substantial resources for Gulf Coast restoration, the Service is expected to move forward with project reviews in a timely manner. The Service is also encouraged to evaluate establishing a reimbursement policy to recover costs for work required by statute for projects funded by future disaster settlements.

The Committees support the continuation of collaborative efforts in the Pacific Northwest with the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and affected Tribes that will result in the completion of all Puget Sound hatchery program consultations by the Fall, 2018.

The Service is encouraged to place a priority on providing technical assistance to partners making good faith efforts to develop and implement responsible habitat conservation plans as authorized by the ESA.

The Service is urged to address consultations and permitting of public and private projects related to the Preble's meadow jumping mouse as one of the highest priorities.

*Conservation and Restoration.*—The agreement provides \$32,396,000 for conservation and restoration activities. Funding for all program elements within this subactivity are restored to the fiscal year 2017 enacted levels.

The Service is expected to focus Candidate Conservation funding on the annual Candidate Notice of Review as required by the ESA, providing technical assistance to States and others, and developing agreements that provide regulatory certainty to landowners. The Service should look to its other programs and its partners to fund and implement conservation activities on the ground. The Service is commended for its efforts in the Southeast to work with States and others to preclude the need to list many of the hundreds of species recently petitioned for listing, and is expected to expand this model nationwide.

*Recovery.*—The agreement provides \$91,032,000 for activities in support of the recovery and delisting of threatened and endangered species, with continued funding for the following program elements at or above the fiscal year 2017 enacted levels: Bay Delta, \$1,659,000; white nose syndrome, \$2,000,000; State of the Birds, \$3,000,000; and the wolf-livestock loss demonstration program,

\$1,000,000. States with de-listed wolf populations shall continue to be eligible for funding, provided that those States continue to meet the eligibility criteria contained in Public Law 111-11.

General program activities are funded at \$74,000,000. The Service is expected to focus the funds on inherently Federal activities such as recovery plan approvals, the backlog of five-year reviews, status changes, and associated collaboration with States and other partners. An additional \$4,373,000 is provided to propose and finalize rules for the backlog of species with completed 5-year reviews that recommend delisting and downlisting.

In developing and implementing recovery plans, the Service is directed to make full use of its authority under section 4(f)(2) of the ESA to "procure the services of appropriate public and private agencies and institutions, and other qualified persons." While recovery plan approval and delisting decisions ultimately rest with the Service and make collaboration essential to success, plan development and implementation are not inherently Federal. Species recovery is a shared responsibility that does not default to the Fish and Wildlife Service. Where able partners are willing to increase or lead these efforts, the Service is expected to shift to supportive roles through technical assistance and cost-shared grants.

To expand partnerships through cost-shared grants, the agreement includes program increases within the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund and State and Tribal Wildlife Grants. In addition, \$5,000,000 is provided in Resource Management for Recovery Challenge matching grants to enhance and increase partnerships with agencies and organizations implementing highest priority recovery actions as prescribed in recovery plans, and in particular for genetically-sound breeding, rearing, and reintroduction programs. Longstanding partnerships, including for the northern aplomado falcon, California condor, and Steller's eider, should be funded at not less than \$2,000,000 and partner contributions should be not less than their current amounts. The remaining funds should be dedicated to new partnerships and should require a 50:50 match, which may include in-kind services. Unless an affected State is a partner on the project, none of the funds may be awarded to a project until the project partners have consulted with such State. The Service is strongly encouraged to transfer similar recovery plan implementation partnerships to Recovery Challenge grants in future budget requests, so that all other Recovery funds in the Resource Management account are prioritized to ensure accomplishment of inherently Federal functions.

The Service is urged to work with the State of Utah on a mutually agreeable plan to recover the Utah prairie dog, as discussed in House Report 115-238.

The Committees are aware that the Service is currently undertaking a required status review of the American Burying Beetle to determine whether listing as an endangered species is still warranted. Within funds provided, the Service is directed to propose a rule by the end of the fiscal year to delist or

downlist the American Burying Beetle should the status review make a finding that delisting or downlisting is warranted.

The Committees acknowledge the important roles that science and Federal wildlife biologists have in the Service's decisions to recover species. The Service's Science program is directed to initiate a study not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, through a qualified independent entity such as the Smithsonian Institution, to determine whether or not animals currently classified as red wolves and Mexican gray wolves are taxonomically valid species and subspecies designations, respectively. The study shall include publication of a scientific literature review, including genetic research, not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act and, if the literature is inconclusive, shall include any additional necessary research and publication not later than three years after the date of enactment of this Act. In the meantime, the Service's Recovery program is reminded of its legal mandate to cooperate to the maximum extent practicable with the States, especially when there has been conflict between species and private property owners. As such, the Service is directed to continue working closely with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission on management of red wolves in fiscal year 2018.

The Service should seek the most current science as it works to implement the agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation on management of the Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bear Population. The Service is expected to consult with and incorporate traditional knowledge from Alaska Native Organizations on matters related to subsistence hunting, and to work with Alaska Native Organizations and other wildlife management organizations with expertise in subsistence hunting to implement a civil-based, co-management regime.

*Habitat Conservation.*—The agreement provides \$65,008,000 for habitat conservation programs, of which \$51,633,000 is for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program and \$13,375,000 is for the Coastal Program. All program elements within these two subactivities are restored to fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, except as discussed in the opening paragraph, including \$1,285,000 for fisheries enhancement. The Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project is funded at \$1,725,000.

*National Wildlife Refuge System.*—The agreement provides \$486,757,000 for the National Wildlife Refuge System and maintains subactivities and program elements at fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, except where identified in the opening paragraph or described below.

*Wildlife and Habitat Management.*—The agreement includes: \$2,835,000 to manage subsistence fishing and hunting; \$10,000,000 for invasive species, including \$75,000 for the Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project; \$1,500,000 for the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument; and \$196,089,000 for general program activities which includes the absorption of the former Healthy Habitats and Populations initiative.



The agreement supports the directive in House Report 114-632 instituting signage on any individual refuge where trapping occurs and establishing guidance to be included in the refuge manual. Until the Committees are notified in writing that all directives are complied with, \$2,000,000 of the funding provided for Wildlife and Habitat Management is not available for obligation.

The Service is reminded of the directive contained in House Report 115-238 regarding the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

The Service is expected to follow the directive from previous fiscal years that prohibits a caribou hunt on Kagalaska Island and efforts to remove cattle on Chirikof and Wosnesenski Islands in the State of Alaska.

*Visitor Services.*—The agreement includes \$2,000,000 for the youth program. Funding has been provided to continue the Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership program at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level and to support efforts to promote conservation in urban areas. The Committees encourage the Service to consider prioritizing funding for a new visitor center at the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The Service is directed to brief the Committees on options for preserving historic aircraft located within the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument on Atka Island in Alaska within 90 days of enactment of this Act. The Committees encourage the Service to work with local stakeholders and consider prioritizing enhancements at the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in its internal budget processes – including new trails, visitor center exhibits, and other infrastructure priorities – to improve the visitor experience for the increasing number of visitors at the refuge.

*Conservation Planning.*—The Service is encouraged to work with affected landowners to address concerns about the acquisition boundary for Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge, as discussed in House Report 115-238.

The agreement directs the Service to approve the establishment of the Green River National Wildlife Refuge in the Green River Bottoms area near the confluence of the Green River and Ohio River in Henderson County, Kentucky. The refuge should consist of approximately 24,000 acres – to be acquired from willing landowners. The Service should partner with other stakeholders on establishment of the refuge and look for opportunities related to environmental mitigation for interstate bridge construction projects in the area. The Service is directed to wait to establish final boundaries of the refuge until the new I-69 interstate bridge corridor is selected. Within 120 days of the date of enactment of this Act, the Service is directed to report to the Committees on its progress toward establishment of the refuge.

*Refuge Maintenance.*—The agreement includes \$42,901,000 to reduce the backlog of deferred maintenance and \$649,000 to continue the Youth Conservation Corps. The Service is encouraged to

consider prioritizing repairs of water control structures at the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

*Conservation and Enforcement.*—The agreement provides \$141,290,000 for other conservation and enforcement programs as described below.

*Migratory Bird Management.*—The agreement provides \$48,421,000 to continue all Migratory Bird Management programs at or above fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, including: \$2,000,000 for aviation safety; \$350,000 to manage bird-livestock conflicts; and \$3,424,000 to expedite permits. The Service is commended for its efforts to work with landowners to reduce black vulture predation on livestock.

*Law Enforcement.*—The agreement provides \$77,053,000 to continue all law enforcement programs at fiscal year 2017 enacted levels and includes a \$2,000,000 increase for wildlife inspectors at ports currently without personnel, in order to deter illegal activities and to ensure that legal trade is not significantly slowed because of a lack of Service personnel. Wildlife trafficking enforcement activities continue to be funded at \$7,500,000, which may also be used as needed to supplement inspections. The Service is directed to enforce illegal logging violations pursuant to the Lacey Act. From within general program activities, funding is provided to continue the Service's work with the Indian Arts and Crafts Board to combat international trafficking of counterfeit arts and crafts and to conduct criminal investigations of alleged violations of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act.

The Committees support efforts outlined in House Report 115-238 for the Service to collaborate with U.S. Customs and Border Protection on the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE).

*International Affairs.*—The agreement provides \$15,816,000 and continues all program elements at the fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, including \$550,000 to support the Arctic Council.

As outlined in House Report 115-238, the Committees encourage the Service to continue to work with stakeholders to address their concerns related to international trade in wood and wood products and advance efforts to develop a domestic electronic permitting system and an electronic form for data collection to expedite processing of licit imports and exports of these products.

The Committees recognize the Service's work with Mexico and Central American nations and urge the continuation of these international partnerships.

Within 150 days of enactment of this Act, the Committees expect the report directed in House Report 115-238 on the CITES permitting process for live plants and the analysis of actions that could create efficiencies.

*Fish and Aquatic Conservation.*—The agreement provides \$164,627,000 for fish and aquatic conservation programs and maintains subactivities and program elements at fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, except where identified in the opening paragraph or described below. The Service is expected to

continue its tradition of improving freshwater subsistence, commercial, and recreational fishing since 1871.

*National Fish Hatchery System Operations.*—The agreement provides \$55,822,000 and includes: \$550,000 to implement the Great Lakes Consent Decree; \$1,430,000 for the national wild fish health survey program; \$1,475,000 to continue mass marking salmonids in the Pacific Northwest; and \$1,200,000 for the Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership. None of the funds may be used to terminate operations or to close any facility of the National Fish Hatchery System. None of the production programs listed in the March 2013 National Fish Hatchery System Strategic Hatchery and Workforce Planning Report may be reduced or terminated without advance, informal consultation with affected States and Tribes. ( ;

The Service is expected to continue funding mitigation hatchery programs via reimbursable agreements with Federal partners. Future agreements should include reimbursement for production, facilities, and administrative costs. The Service is expected to ensure that its costs are fully reimbursed before proposing to reduce or redirect base funding.

*Maintenance and Equipment.*—The agreement provides \$22,920,000 which includes \$13,249,000 to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog, and, in addition to amounts provided in the Construction account, funding should continue to be allocated to facilities with the most severe health and safety deficiencies across the System as a whole, rather than by region. All other funds should continue to be allocated as in prior years and should include mitigation hatcheries as needed to supplement reimbursable funds.

*Habitat Assessment and Restoration.*—The agreement provides \$33,987,000, which includes \$13,998,000 for the National Fish Passage Program, \$3,000,000 to implement the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement, and \$5,000,000 to implement the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act (DRBCA). Within 90 days of enactment of this Act, the Service is directed to brief the Committees on its efforts related to the DRBCA. The Service is directed to be transparent with its partners regarding Federal costs for program coordination and administration of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

*Population Assessment and Cooperative Management.*—The agreement provides \$30,150,000 which includes \$9,554,000 for subsistence fisheries management and \$15,635,000 for general program activities, of which \$489,000 is for the Lake Champlain sea lamprey program.

*Aquatic Invasive Species.*—The agreement includes \$21,748,000 for aquatic invasive species programs, of which: \$1,000,000 is to help States implement plans required by the National Invasive Species Act (NISA); \$1,566,000 is for NISA coordination; \$3,088,000 is to implement subsection 5(d)(2) of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act; \$10,400,000 is for controlling Asian carp in the Mississippi and Ohio River Basins and preventing them from entering and establishing in the Great Lakes, including

\$2,000,000 to expand and perfect the combined use of contract fishing and deterrents to extirpate Asian carp, including grass carp, where already established; and \$2,000,000 is to prevent the spread of quagga and zebra mussels.

The Committees support efforts to address threats to aquatic invasive species and direct the Service to continue to make available competitive grant funding for projects to eliminate invasive species, including Asian carp, quagga and zebra mussels, and variable-leaf watermilfoil. The Service should continue to support research, monitoring, and mitigation efforts, as well as efforts to disseminate such work, in all regions.

*Cooperative Landscape Conservation.*—The agreement provides \$12,988,000 for cooperative landscape conservation, of which \$1,000,000 is for the Gulf Coast ecosystem. The Committees recognize the disparate levels of partner support across the States and expect the Service to focus funding where partnerships are strong.

*Science Support.*—The agreement provides \$17,267,000 for the Science Support program and includes \$931,000 to restore the Gulf Coast ecosystem, and \$3,500,000 for white-nose syndrome in bats. The Service should continue to co-lead and implement the North American Bat Monitoring Program with other Federal, State, and non-governmental partners. The Service is expected to partner with Cooperative Research Units whenever possible.

*General Operations.*—The agreement provides \$143,240,000 for general operations and includes funding for central office operations, regional office operations, and Service-wide bill paying at the requested levels. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is funded at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. A one-time program increase of \$4,300,000 is provided for annual maintenance needs of the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). The Committees understand this funding will fully address backlog maintenance at NCTC.

## CONSTRUCTION

The bill provides \$66,540,000 for Construction and includes a one-time increase of \$50,000,000 for the backlog of deferred maintenance principally at national fish hatcheries and national wildlife refuges. The Service is directed to provide a spend plan to the Committees within 120 days of enactment of this Act for the additional deferred maintenance funding. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement. For line-item construction, the Service is expected to follow the project priority list in the table below. When a construction project is completed or terminated and appropriated funds remain, the Service may use those balances to respond to unforeseen

reconstruction, replacement, or repair of facilities or equipment damaged or destroyed by storms, floods, fires and similar unanticipated events.

State	Refuge, Hatchery, or Other Unit	Budget Request	This Bill
National Wildlife Refuge System			
OK	Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)	\$3,800,000	\$3,800,000
AK	Alaska Maritime NWR	2,235,000	2,235,000
IL	Crab Orchard NWR	300,000	300,000
MO	Mingo NWR	800,000	800,000
GA	Okefenokee NWR	80,000	80,000
ID	Bear Lake NWR	50,000	50,000
WA	Inland Northwest NWR Complex	70,000	70,000
National Fish Hatchery System			
MI	Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery	1,043,000	1,043,000
Other			
N/A	Branch of Dam Safety (seismic investigations)	215,000	215,000
N/A	Branch of Dam Safety (inspections)	250,000	250,000
N/A	Information Resources & Technology Management	250,000	250,000
Total, Line Item Construction		9,093,000	9,093,000

#### LAND ACQUISITION

The bill provides \$63,839,000 for Land Acquisition. The amounts provided by this bill compared with the budget estimates by activity and project are shown in the table below, listed in priority order pursuant to the project list received for fiscal year 2018. Further instructions are contained under the Land and Water Conservation Fund heading in the front of this explanatory statement.

In a time when budgetary constraints allow for only a limited number of new land acquisition projects, the Committees are encouraged by programs that leverage public/private partnerships for land conservation like the Highlands Conservation Act, which has a record of more than a 2 to 1 ratio in non-Federal matching funds. Therefore, the Committees include \$10,000,000 for the Highlands Conservation Act Grants and direct the Fish and Wildlife Service to work with the Highlands States regarding priority projects for fiscal year 2018.

The Committees recognize there are concerns regarding the acquisition and management of easements in some States. Any uncertainty about the scope of management responsibilities among stakeholders and agencies should be addressed by engaging in a constructive dialogue and reaching a unified solution that honors the rights of individual landowners while implementing sound conservation practices. Therefore, in lieu of the House directive, the Service is strongly encouraged to begin this dialogue and brief the Committees within 60 days of enactment of this Act on the challenges of the Service harmonizing current easement laws and regulations with landowners and State governments with options to resolve these challenges.

State	Project	This Bill	
HI	Hakalau Forest NWR	\$7,000,000	
ND/SD	Dakota Grassland Conservation Area	5,000,000	
MD	Blackwater NWR	1,000,000	
FL	Everglades Headwaters NWR and CA	2,500,000	
PA	Cherry Valley NWR	2,500,000	
ND/SD	Dakota Tallgrass Prairie Wildlife Management Area	2,000,000	
MT	Montana Conservation Areas	2,000,000	
FL	St. Marks NWR	2,000,000	
IA/MN	Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR	1,000,000	
CT/MA /NH/VT	Silvio O. Conte NF&WR	1,750,000	
TX	Lower Rio Grande NWR	2,500,000	
AR	Cache River NWR	2,000,000	
Subtotal, Line Item Projects		31,250,000	
		Budget Request	This Bill
Recreational Access		0	2,500,000
Emergencies, Hardships, and Inholdings		2,641,000	5,351,000
Exchanges		1,197,000	1,500,000
Acquisition Management		12,749,000	12,773,000
Land Protection Planning		464,000	465,000
Highlands Conservation Act Grants		0	10,000,000
Total, FWS Land Acquisition		17,051,000	63,839,000

#### COOPERATIVE ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND

The bill provides \$53,495,000 to carry out section 6 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, of which \$33,857,000 is to be derived from the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund and \$19,638,000 is to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement. The Service is directed to lift the artificial caps and apportion funds to Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) based on need in order to increase on-the-ground conservation and eliminate unobligated balances. The agreement includes a program increase of \$2,000,000 in traditional conservation grants in order to foster increased partner involvement in recovery plan development and implementation, which is offset by a decrease in HCP planning assistance grants due to a lack of demand.

#### NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE FUND

The bill provides \$13,228,000 for payments to counties from the National Wildlife Refuge Fund.

#### NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION FUND

The bill provides \$40,000,000 for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund. The Service is directed to follow the guidance in House Report 115-238.

#### NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION FUND

The bill provides \$3,910,000 for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

#### MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND

The bill provides \$11,061,000 for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

#### STATE AND TRIBAL WILDLIFE GRANTS

The bill provides \$63,571,000 for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement. All three grant programs shall place the highest priority on species included in the most recent Candidate Notice of Review so as to preclude the need to list such species under the ESA.

States and Tribes receiving funds through this program are encouraged to work with private landowners and organizations representing agriculture, conservation science, and waterfowl habitat enhancement to provide wetland habitat for at-risk shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors and other species.

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

The agreement provides \$2,477,969,000 for the Operation of the National Park System and includes requested fixed costs. The detailed allocation of funding by program area and activity is included in the table at the end of this division.

*Operation of the National Park System.*—The bill does not support reductions proposed in the budget request that would diminish visitor services and reduce park and program operations system-wide. Within Resource Stewardship, the Committees have restored all proposed reductions to Everglades restoration efforts and to complete restoration projects at newly established park units. The recommendation also includes \$3,000,000 to continue zebra and quagga mussel containment, prevention, and enforcement in western water bodies, and \$500,000 for cave and karst ecosystem research. The agreement continues the directive provided within the Visitor Services line item contained in House Report 115-238. The reduction from fiscal year 2017 within Park Protection is for non-recurring expenses related to the Presidential Inauguration. The agreement includes \$5,000,000 to support timely aviation fleet replacement by the Washington, DC area U.S. Park Police aviation unit which supports law enforcement and public safety in the national capital region. Within Facility Operations and Maintenance, the Committees have accepted the Service's proposal to eliminate the Flex Park program in order to focus resources on critical park operations and programs. The agreement retains funding increases provided within the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 to address deferred maintenance needs and provides an additional \$15,000,000 to address cyclic maintenance needs, an additional \$10,000,000 for repair and rehabilitation projects, and an additional \$10,000,000 for project planning. These funds are supplemented by \$23,000,000 provided within the Centennial Challenge matching grant program account dedicated to funding joint public-private investments in parks. Increases within Park Support are to address new responsibilities and critical needs at park units including but not limited to Freedom Riders, Castle Mountains, and Birmingham Civil Rights units. The recommendation also restores proposed reductions to park units including the Manhattan Project National Historical Park and Honouliuli units, and the Partnership Wild and Scenic River program. Each are funded at the fiscal year



2017 enacted level. Funding for the Roosevelt-Campobello International Park is also maintained at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Quagga and Zebra Mussel Control.*—The Committees remain concerned about the spread of quagga and zebra mussels in the West and have provided \$3,000,000 for continued containment, prevention, and enforcement efforts.

*Eastern Legacy Study (Lewis and Clark Trail Study).*—The Eastern Legacy Study, authorized to determine the feasibility of extending the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, is now four years overdue. The Committees direct the Service to complete the study expeditiously.

*Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.*—The agreement maintains the directive related to the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area contained in House Report 115-238.

*Elwha Water Facilities.*—The agreement includes the directive related to the Elwha Water Facilities contained in House Report 115-238.


*Natchez Visitor Reception Center.*—The Committees understand that the Service is engaged in discussions with Natchez, MS over accepting a donation of the Natchez Visitor Reception Center and encourage the Service to reach agreement on such donation in a timely fashion.

*National Park Service Local Hire Implementation.*—Within 90 days of enactment of this Act, the Committees direct the Service in cooperation with other relevant agencies to provide a report on numbers of employees hired in Alaska with the authorities under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).

*Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park.*—The agreement includes requested funding for the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park with the expectation that the Service will continue to make funds available to the local coordinating entity to maintain staffing and capacity to assist in management of the park as authorized in Public Law 113-291.

*Cape Lookout National Seashore.*—As the Service reviews the Cape Lookout National Seashore's Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan, the Committees expect the Service to adopt the least restrictive land use option that allows adequate access to the Seashore while maintaining sufficient protections for wildlife and natural resources.

*National Trails System.*—In preparation for the National Trails System's 50-year anniversary in 2018, the Committees urge the Service to make funding the construction and maintenance of national trails a priority.

*Biscayne National Park.*—The agreement maintains the directive related to Biscayne Bay  National Park contained in House Report 115-238.

*Everglades Restoration.*—The Committees note the progress made toward restoration of the Everglades ecosystem and continue to support this multi-year effort to preserve one of the great ecological treasures of the United States.

*Vicksburg National Military Park.*—The agreement maintains the directive related to Vicksburg National Military Park contained in House Report 115-238.

*Arlington Memorial Bridge.*—The Committees commend the Department for its efforts, working with bipartisan Federal, State, and local leaders, to secure \$227,000,000 to rehabilitate the Arlington Memorial Bridge, a historic and critical transportation link in the nation's capital. As awarded, the design-build contract will save \$35,000,000 and accelerate the project's completion by 18 months. Major construction is scheduled to begin later in 2018.

*Ozark National Scenic Riverways.*—The Service is directed to work collaboratively with affected parties to ensure that implementation of the General Management Plan for the Ozark National Scenic Riverways addresses the concerns of affected stakeholders including, but not limited to, local communities and businesses.

*St. Anthony Falls Lock.*—The agreement includes the directive related to St. Anthony Falls Lock contained in House Report 115-238.

*Yosemite Medical Clinic.*—The agreement maintains the directive related to the Yosemite Medical Clinic contained in House Report 115-238.

*Director's Order 21.*—Within 90 days of enactment of this Act, the Service shall report to the Committees on steps it has taken or plans to take in fiscal year 2018 to implement Public Law 113-291.

*Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum.*—The Committees direct the Service to provide a report within 30 days of enactment of this Act indicating what funds have been allocated to the Memorial and options to provide the remaining authorized amount.

*Alaska Hunting and Trapping.*—The Committees are aware that the National Park Service intends to initiate a rulemaking process that will consider changes to the final rule published October 23, 2015, related to hunting and trapping in National Preserves in Alaska. This will include identifying ways to address recreational hunting and fishing cooperation, consultation, and communication with State of Alaska wildlife managers. The Committees expect the Service to complete the review in a timely manner.

#### NATIONAL RECREATION AND PRESERVATION

The agreement provides \$63,638,000 for National Recreation and Preservation with the following specific directives:

*Natural Programs.*—The Committees maintain funding for Natural Programs, including the Chesapeake Gateways and Trails program and Rivers, Trails and Conservation, at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Cultural Programs.*—The Committees provide \$25,062,000 for Cultural Programs, an increase of \$500,000 above the enacted level. The increase is provided for grants to nonprofit organizations or institutions pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 4451(b). The Committees direct the Department to consider funding the Northwest Coast arts program as outlined by the memorandum of agreement between the Institute of American Indian Arts and the Sealaska Heritage Institute. Funding for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Grant Program and the Japanese American Confinement Site Grant Program is maintained at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Heritage Partnership Program.*—The agreement provides \$20,321,000 for the Heritage Partnership Program. The Committees continue to encourage individual heritage areas to develop plans for long-term sufficiency. The Committees commend the Alliance of National Heritage Areas, in response to Congressional direction, for developing an allocation model that maintains core services of more established areas while proposing additional resources to newer areas. The Committees note this progress and direct the Service to work with heritage areas to further develop consensus toward a sustainable funding distribution. As this effort continues, the Committees expect the Service to distribute funds in the same manner as fiscal year 2017 with the increase above the enacted level to be equally distributed to Tier I areas or Tier 2 areas currently receiving the minimum funding levels of \$150,000 and \$300,000 respectively.

*Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area.*—The Committees encourage the continued partnership between the Muscle Shoals Regional Center and the University of North Alabama.

*National Heritage Area Feasibility Study.*—The Committees understand that the Service has no intent to initiate or conduct a feasibility study to establish a national heritage area in Baca, Bent, Crowley, Huerfano, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, and Pueblo counties, Colorado. In the event the Service alters its intentions, the Committees direct the Service to notify the Committees 120 days in advance of initiating such a study.

*American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants.*—Funding is provided at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. The Committees recognize the importance of public-private partnerships to maintain the preservation of America's battlefields and urge the Service to give priority to projects with broad partner support. The Committees continue to encourage the timely review and processing of grants.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

The agreement provides \$96,910,000 for the Historic Preservation Fund. Within this amount, \$48,925,000 is provided for grants to States and \$11,485,000 is provided for grants to Tribes. The recommendation also includes \$13,500,000 for competitive grants of which \$500,000 is for grants to underserved communities and \$13,000,000 is for competitive grants to document, interpret, and preserve historical sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement. The agreement also includes \$5,000,000 for competitive grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and \$13,000,000 for the Save America's Treasures competitive grant program for preservation of nationally significant sites, structures, and artifacts. The agreement also provides \$5,000,000 for preservation grants to revitalize historic properties of national, State, and local significance. Grants shall be made available to States, local governments, Tribes, or community non-profit organizations for making sub-grants to eligible projects. Priority shall be given to applicants with a demonstrated capacity for allocating similar awards for preservation of such sites. Prior to execution of these funds, the Service shall submit a spend plan to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate.

## CONSTRUCTION

The agreement provides \$359,704,000 for Construction with the following specific directive:

*Line Item Construction.*—The agreement provides \$137,011,000 for line item construction and maintenance including \$129,011,000 for line item construction projects in the fiscal year 2018 budget request as revised by the Service and provided to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on July 25, 2017, and shown in the table below. A general program increase of \$138,000,000 above the request is provided to address only longstanding deferred maintenance and major construction related requirements of the Service. General management planning has been provided an additional \$1,860,000 above the request in order to facilitate the completion of recently authorized special resource studies. The Committees direct the Service to provide no later than 60 days after enactment of this Act an operating plan for allocation of funds. Requests for reprogramming will be considered pursuant to the guidelines in the front of this explanatory statement.

State	Park Unit	Budget Request	This Bill
DC	George Washington Memorial Parkway	\$18,200,000	\$18,200,000
DC	National Mall and Memorial Parks	21,371,000	21,371,000

MA	Lowell National Historical Park	4,177,000	4,177,000
MA	Cape Cod National Seashore	5,442,000	5,442,000
WY	Yellowstone National Park	21,264,000	21,264,000
CA	Fort Point National Historic Site	5,996,000	5,996,000
CA	Channel Islands National Park	3,922,000	3,922,000
SD	Mount Rushmore National Memorial	8,937,000	8,937,000
MS	Vicksburg National Military Park	5,909,000	5,909,000
AK	Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve	7,545,000	7,545,000
TN	Great Smoky Mountain National Park	2,594,000	2,594,000
PA	Valley Forge National Historical Park	10,030,000	10,030,000
NM	Old Santa Fe Trail Building	2,822,000	2,822,000
AZ	Lake Mead National Recreation Area	1,976,000	1,976,000
CA	Death Valley National Park	5,394,000	5,394,000
NM	Carlsbad Caverns National Park	3,432,000	3,432,000
Total, Line Item Construction		129,011,000	129,011,000

#### LAND ACQUISITION AND STATE ASSISTANCE

The bill provides \$180,941,000 for Land Acquisition and State Assistance. The amounts provided by this bill compared with the budget estimates by activity and project are shown in the table below, listed in priority order pursuant to the project list received for fiscal year 2018. The Committees understand that donation projects, such as the Vicksburg National Military Park listed on the NPS project list for fiscal year 2018, are eligible to be funded from the amounts included for donation projects. Funds provided for recreational access are available to close gaps in national trails, including the Ice Age, North Country, and New England National Scenic Trails. The Committees urge the Service to consider geographic distribution to ensure that investments for the trail system are reflected in project prioritization. Further instructions are contained under the Land and Water Conservation Fund heading in the front of this explanatory statement.

The Committees continue to support the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) and are aware of the increased workload and associated delays in grant processing due to the program's expanded mission to include Revolutionary War and War of 1812 sites and additional historic preservation reviews. Therefore, the bill provides \$10,000,000 for ABPP grants and \$252,000 is provided from within acquisition management to ensure the timely awarding of grants.

State	Project	This Bill	
NY	Appalachian National Scenic Trail	\$2,000,000	
GA	Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area	1,218,000	
AZ	Saguaro National Park	600,000	
OH	Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park	450,000	
WA	Lake Chelan National Recreation Area	1,000,000	
CA	Redwood National Park	6,000,000	
TN	Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area	217,000	
NM	Valles Caldera National Preserve	531,000	
MI	North Country National Scenic Trail	3,472,000	
HI	Haleakala National Park	6,000,000	
AK	Katmai National Park and Preserve	2,545,000	
TN	Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail	387,000	
TN	Obed Wild and Scenic River	810,000	
MI	Keweenaw National Historical Park	155,000	
WV	Gauley River National Recreation Area	1,015,000	
Subtotal, Line Item Projects		26,400,000	
		Budget Request	This Bill
American Battlefield Protection Program		8,481,000	10,000,000
Emergencies, Hardships, Relocations, and Deficiencies		3,071,000	3,928,000
Acquisition Management		8,716,000	9,679,000
Inholdings, Donations, and Exchanges		3,069,000	4,928,000
Recreational Access		0	2,000,000
Total, NPS Land Acquisition		23,337,000	56,935,000
Assistance to States:			
State conservation grants (formula)		0	100,000,000
State conservation grants (competitive)		0	20,000,000
Administrative expenses		3,043,000	4,006,000
Total, Assistance to States		3,043,000	124,006,000
Total, NPS Land Acquisition and State Assistance		26,380,000	180,941,000

## CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE

The agreement provides \$23,000,000 for the Centennial Challenge matching grant program. The program provides dedicated Federal funding to leverage partnerships for signature projects and programs for the national park system. The Committees expect these funds to be used by the Service to address projects which have a deferred maintenance component in order to alleviate the sizeable deferred maintenance backlog within the national park system. A one-to-one matching requirement is required for projects to qualify for these funds. The Service is urged to give preference to projects that demonstrate additional leveraging capacity from its partners. From amounts in the Centennial Challenge account, the Committees encourage the Department to make \$3,000,000 available for critical programs and projects, pursuant to 54 U.S.C. 1011 Subchapter II, subject to terms and conditions outlined in Title VI of Public Law 114-289.

## UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY SURVEYS, INVESTIGATIONS, AND RESEARCH

The bill provides \$1,148,457,000 for Surveys, Investigations, and Research of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS, or the Survey). This includes additional, one-time funding for the purchase of equipment, infrastructure related projects, and deferred maintenance that should not be considered programmatic increases and for which the Committees expect a detailed spend plan within 180 days of enactment of this Act. The detailed allocation of funding by program area and activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

*Congressional Budget Justification.*—The Committees direct the Survey to include in future justifications base funding and program descriptions for any subactivity, program, project, or study proposed for increases or reductions.

*Ecosystems.*—The agreement provides \$157,732,000, and does not include reductions for program terminations proposed in the budget request for Status and Trends and the Wildlife Program. The Survey is directed to formulate a transition plan with the Smithsonian Institution regarding the curation of the Institution's collection for which the Survey is currently responsible.

The agreement also includes an increase of \$500,000 from within available funds to address white-nose syndrome in bats. The Committees are aware of the work the Survey is performing in critical landscapes such as the Arctic, Puget Sound, California Bay Delta, Everglades, Great Lakes, Columbia River, and the Chesapeake Bay, and expect this work to continue. The Terrestrial, Freshwater, and Marine Environments program is funded as reported in House Report 115-238, and species-specific fisheries and Asian carp funding are maintained at fiscal year 2017 enacted levels. The Committees understand certain

programs are nearing completion; therefore, the Survey is directed to report back to the Committees within 180 days of enactment of this Act on anticipated balances of such programs.

*Land Resources.*—The agreement provides \$152,499,000, which includes \$93,094,000 for the National Land Imaging activity. Within these funds, Landsat 9 is fully funded at a program level of \$26,200,000; satellite operations receive \$52,337,000; National Civil Applications Center receives \$4,847,000; and the AmericaView State grant program receives \$1,215,000.

The Committees accept the proposed budget structure changes with the understanding that the work previously funded in the fiscal year 2017 structure will continue at fiscal year 2017 enacted levels and that the Survey will continue to track and provide information on funding within the Land Change sub-lines. The Committees provide funding for the eight regional science centers and grant awards should be made at the negotiated annual agreement levels. The Survey is directed to provide notification to the Committees as the grants are awarded in full. As a result of the budget restructure, \$5,025,000 is provided so that work previously funded under the old budget structure will continue within the Land Change Science subactivity.

*Energy, Minerals, and Environmental Health.*—The agreement provides \$102,838,000 for Energy, Minerals, and Environmental Health, including \$1,000,000 toward the domestic mineral base survey and \$4,700,000 for the implementation of Secretarial Order 3352. As a result of the budget restructure, \$1,477,000 is provided for work previously funded at this level in fiscal year 2017 and now funded under the Mineral and Energy Resources subactivity. The Committees accept the \$2,457,000 reduction proposed in the budget due to the completion of reports as required by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-140). The Committees expect geologic and biologic research to continue under the new budget restructure.

The Committees continue geophysical and remote sensing activities at the enacted funding levels and direct the Survey to continue this work following the requirements outlined in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31). The Committees also expect low permeability reservoir assessments to continue at the 2017 enacted level and that the Survey will continue to abide by the directive outlined in Public Law 115-31 concerning consultation with State geological surveys.

The agreement provides \$12,398,000 for toxic substances hydrology. The Committees support the Survey's comprehensive research on cyanobacterial harmful algal blooms and provide an increase of \$1,350,000 over the fiscal year 2017 enacted level for this effort.

*Natural Hazards.*—The agreement provides \$178,613,000 for the Natural Hazards Program, including \$83,403,000 for earthquake hazards. Within this funding, \$12,900,000 is provided for continued development of an earthquake early warning (EEW) system and for the first limited public rollout of ShakeAlert, and an additional \$10,000,000 is provided for capital costs associated with the



buildout of the EEW. Within 60 days of enactment of this Act, the Survey is directed to provide to the Committees an updated Technical Implementation Plan for the ShakeAlert Production System, including revised cost estimates and timelines. Additionally, \$5,000,000 is provided for necessary upgrades and replacement equipment at the USGS National Earthquake Center and seismic stations that make up the Advanced National Seismic System (ANSS).

The agreement includes \$800,000 for the Central and Eastern U.S. Seismic Network (CEUSN). The Committees continue \$1,000,000 for regional seismic networks and expect the Survey to allocate funds according to the same methodology used in fiscal year 2017. The agreement includes \$1,400,000 for the adoption of seismic stations currently deployed as part of the Earthscope USArray project. The Committees direct the Survey to consult with the National Science Foundation (NSF) on acquiring these seismic stations beginning in fiscal year 2019 and to brief the Committees within 60 days of enactment of this Act on the progress of these discussions and the plan to acquire the stations. The Committees understand the adoption of the seismic and geodetic stations currently deployed as part of the USArray project, along with the ANSS investments in seismic monitoring, could contribute to a monitoring network similar to the earthquake early warning system currently under development for the west coast and encourage the Survey to consider this effort once the west coast system is close to completion.

The agreement provides \$42,621,000 for volcano hazards, which includes \$1,000,000 for next-generation lahar detection systems and \$13,000,000 for the repair and upgrade of analog systems on high-threat volcanos, including \$12,500,000 to update the instrumentation that is currently not in compliance with the National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA) radio spectrum guidelines.

The agreement provides an additional \$1,500,000 for new lahar detection instrumentation and telecommunications equipment to address significant lahar threats and meet National Volcano Early Warning System (NVEWS) standards.

The Committees are concerned about the potential landslide risk to communities and direct the Survey to report back within 180 days of enactment of this Act identifying specific areas of the country that are at the highest risk.

*Water Resources.*—The agreement provides \$217,554,000 for Water Resources, with \$59,927,000 directed to activities associated with the Cooperative Matching Funds. Increases include an additional \$1,000,000 for groundwater resource studies in the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain; \$1,500,000 for streamgages; and \$300,000 to begin research on shallow and fractured bedrock terrain.

The National Groundwater Monitoring Network is funded at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level of \$3,600,000. The agreement includes funding for the streamgage on transboundary rivers at \$120,000. The Committees direct the Survey to partner with local Tribes and other Federal agencies as necessary in the area to develop a water quality strategy for the transboundary rivers impacted by mining activities. Within

180 days of enactment of this Act, the Survey is directed to report back to the Committees on the necessary work needed to collect, analyze, and assess the hydrologic, water-quality, and ecological data needed to document baseline conditions and assess potential mining-related impacts.

*Core Science Systems.*—The agreement provides \$116,302,000, which includes \$23,000,000 for 3D Elevation Program (3DEP) National Enhancement and \$7,722,000 for Alaska Mapping and Map Modernization.

*Facilities.*—The agreement includes \$120,091,000 for facilities, deferred maintenance and capital improvement. Within these amounts, \$11,772,000 is included for the Menlo Park facility transition. The Committees have almost doubled the funding for deferred maintenance with the expectation the Survey will be able to make much needed facility improvements. The Committees understand that a report on the National Wildlife Health Center's infrastructure needs is nearing completion and expect the report to be provided to the Committees within 60 days of enactment of this Act.

## BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

The bill provides \$171,000,000 for Ocean Energy Management to be partially offset with the collection of rental receipts and cost recovery fees totaling \$56,834,000, for a net discretionary appropriation of \$114,166,000. The bill does not include a rescission of funds to cover the anticipated shortfall from the loss of revenue, but the Committees are monitoring the continued decline in rental receipts. The Bureau is reminded to review the directives contained in the front matter of this explanatory statement. The agreement includes the following additional guidance:

*Five-year lease plan.*—The request for the Bureau's efforts to initiate a new five year offshore leasing program is fully funded and the Committees encourage an expeditious and thorough review.

*Offshore Revenues.*—The Committees do not approve of the proposal in the budget request to divert outer continental shelf oil and gas revenues from Gulf of Mexico coastal communities. The Committees direct the Department to distribute revenues from Gulf of Mexico operations in a manner consistent with the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-432).

*Offshore Wind Energy Development.*—The Committees understand that the Bureau is continuing to work in North Carolina with local stakeholders, industry, and State task forces and that there will be no lease sales for offshore areas in North Carolina during fiscal year 2018.

*Renewable Energy.*—The Bureau should continue to follow the direction under this heading in Senate Report 114-281 concerning offshore wind energy and working cooperatively with the Department of Energy and coastal States.

BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT  
OFFSHORE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

The bill provides \$186,411,000 for Offshore Safety and Environmental Enforcement to be partially offset with the collection of rental receipts, cost recovery fees and inspection fees totaling \$77,871,000 for a net discretionary appropriation of \$108,540,000. The bill does not include a rescission of funds to cover the anticipated shortfall from the loss of revenue, but the Committees are monitoring the continued decline in rental receipts.

OIL SPILL RESEARCH

The bill provides \$14,899,000 for Oil Spill Research.

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT  
REGULATION AND TECHNOLOGY

The bill provides \$115,804,000 for the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) Regulation and Technology account. Within this amount, the bill funds regulatory grants at \$68,590,000, equal to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Approximate Original Contours.*—When appropriate, the Committees encourage OSMRE to discontinue cases related to Approximate Original Contour policies and regulations when OSMRE has lost the initial administrative court case on the merits of the case.

ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND

The bill provides \$139,672,000 for the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund. Of the funds provided, \$24,672,000 shall be derived from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund and \$115,000,000 shall be derived from the General Fund.

The agreement provides \$115,000,000 for grants to States and Indian Tribes for the reclamation of abandoned mine lands in conjunction with economic and community development and reuse goals. Consistent with fiscal year 2017, \$75,000,000 shall be distributed in equal amounts to the three Appalachian States with the greatest amount of unfunded needs and \$30,000,000 shall be distributed in equal amounts to the three Appalachian States with the subsequent greatest amount of unfunded needs. Grants shall be distributed to States with the same goals, intent and direction as in fiscal year 2017.

The Committees believe that Tribes can also contribute to the success of the pilot and provide \$10,000,000 for grants to federally recognized Indian Tribes to be distributed for the same goals, intent and purpose as the grants to States. Eligible grant recipients for the \$10,000,000 are limited to Tribal governmental entities who may subcontract project-related activities as appropriate.

*Coal Act.*—The Committees believe OSMRE should avoid taking any action that would place in jeopardy the mandatory benefits for eligible United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) health beneficiaries, including those who receive benefits because of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31), as well as mandatory funds provided to States and Indian Tribes. It has also been brought to the attention of the Committees that certain businesses in rural areas may face job losses because of affiliate liability for healthcare that is unrelated to the benefits enacted in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31). Given the disproportionate impact of job losses in rural areas, the Committees are concerned about those job losses. The Committees urge stakeholders to find a solution that would both avoid job losses in rural areas and is consistent with other potential needs for the mandatory funds overseen by OSMRE.

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION  
OPERATION OF INDIAN PROGRAMS  
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

The bill provides \$2,411,200,000 for Operation of Indian Programs. The Bureaus are expected to execute their budgets in accordance with the justification submitted to the Congress, except as otherwise directed below or in the funding allocation table at the end of this report. The table has been expanded to include additional lines for the Bureau of Indian Education and Public Safety and Justice. The Bureaus are reminded of the guidance and reporting requirements contained in House Report 115-238 that should be complied with unless specifically addressed to the contrary herein, as explained in the front matter of this explanatory statement. The Committees also expect the timely submission of reporting requirements as contained in House Report 115-238 and as outlined in this explanatory statement. The agreement includes requested fixed costs and transfers except where discussed below, and the following details and instructions.

The Committees are concerned about the addition of several programs to the Government Accountability Office's 2017 high risk list (GAO-17-317). The inclusion of these programs to this list indicate there are several challenges to overcome in order to improve the Federal management of programs that serve Tribes and their members. The Committees stand ready to work with the Bureaus to implement the necessary GAO recommendations.

*Tribal Government.*—The agreement provides \$317,967,000 for Tribal government programs, of which \$1,120,000 is for new Tribes including those recognized during fiscal year 2018 beyond those contemplated in the budget request. The Committees expect the Bureau to efficiently administer the Tribal recognition process and strongly encourage action on pending requests. The Small and Needy Tribes program is funded at \$4,448,000, ensuring that all Tribes receive the maximum base level provided by the Bureau to run Tribal governments.

Road maintenance is funded at \$34,653,000 and includes \$1,000,000 to improve the condition of unpaved roads and bridges used by school buses transporting students, and \$1,000,000 for road maintenance in support of implementing the NATIVE Act (P.L. 114-221). The Bureau is directed to report back to the Committees within 60 days of enactment of this Act on how the Bureau plans to allocate the funds provided in the bill and the progress being made to implement the GAO recommendations outlined in the report GAO-17-423.

The Committees are aware that in some areas along the border, including the areas of the Tohono O'odham Nation in Arizona, and the Blackfeet Nation in Montana, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Tribes work together on border security. The Committees have included bill language to support the transfer of funds from CBP to BIA, in consultation with affected Tribes, for the reconstruction or repair of BIA owned roads needed as a result of cooperative security efforts on the U.S. border.

The Committees are concerned about the Consolidated Tribal Government Program internal transfer of \$1,733,000 and have not agreed to any changes from the fiscal year 2017 enacted level of \$75,429,000 for this program. The Bureau is directed to report back to the Committees within 30 days of enactment of this Act with a description of the number of Tribes that use this program and how increases for this program compare to others that offer similar services.

*Human Services.*—The agreement provides \$161,063,000 for human services programs and includes funding to continue the Tiwahe initiative at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. The Bureau is directed to report back to the Committees within 90 days of enactment of this Act on the performance measures being used to monitor and track the Tiwahe initiative's effectiveness in Indian Country. The Committees are aware of the pressing needs women and children face in domestic violence situations; therefore, the Committees expect at least \$200,000 from human services activities be used to support women and children's shelters that are serving the needs of multiple Tribes or Alaska Native Villages in the areas served by the Tiwahe pilot sites.

The Committees are concerned about the funding distribution for welfare assistance and direct the Bureau to report back to the Committees within 30 days of enactment of this Act on how this funding would be distributed.

*Trust – Natural Resources Management.*—The agreement provides \$204,202,000 for natural resources management programs and includes \$390,000 to continue the Seminole and Miccosukee water study as requested. The agreement includes \$355,000 in the Tribal Management Development Program (TMDP) for fisheries activities previously funded within the Forestry program. Future funding requests should reflect the transfer of this activity to TMDP.

It is the Committees' understanding that the Bureau has entered into cooperative agreements with the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission and the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission, and with other organizations interested in establishing similar agreements; therefore, it is the Committees' expectation that within the funding provided for the Tribal Management Development Program (TMDP), pilot projects and programs for Alaska subsistence will continue.

Consistent with treaty and trust obligations, the Committees direct the Bureau to work with at-risk Tribes to identify and expedite the necessary resources to address the resiliency needs of Tribal communities.

Within the amounts provided for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, the agreement continues \$545,000 for substantially producing Tribal hatcheries in BIA's Northwest Region currently not receiving annual BIA hatchery operations funding. This funding should be allocated in the same manner as in fiscal year 2017 but should be considered base funding in fiscal year 2018 and thereafter.

The Department of the Interior is expected to promote and expand the use of agreements with Indian Tribes to protect Indian trust resources from catastrophic wildfire, insect and disease infestation, or other threats from adjacent Federal lands, as authorized by law. The Committees direct the Bureau to coordinate with the Office of Wildland Fire to submit a report describing how the Department determines the use of wildfire suppression and rehabilitation resources and prioritizes Indian forest land, the title to which is held by the United States in trust.

The Bureau is directed to enter into a formal partnership with local Tribes and the United States Geological Survey to help develop a water quality strategy for transboundary rivers.

The Committees expect that Tribes east of the Mississippi River who have resource challenges also receive appropriate funding.

*Trust – Real Estate Services.*—The agreement provides \$129,841,000 for real estate services. All program elements within this subactivity are continued at fiscal year 2017 enacted levels plus fixed costs and transfers, except where discussed below.

The following line items each receive a \$500,000 program increase: land title and records offices; land records improvement—regional; and regional oversight. The Bureau is expected to distribute the program increases to regional offices to address administrative backlogs for Trust Real Estate Services programs. As discussed in House Report 115-238, the Committees expect an update on the status of

outstanding conveyances by September 2018, and an update on what the Bureau will be changing in its operations policy to ensure backlogs and documentation-related rejections do not occur in the future.

Alaska Native programs are funded at \$1,470,000 to support a program level of \$450,000 for the ANCSA Historical Places and Cemetery Sites Program.

A program increase of \$3,000,000 is included for the plugging of abandoned wells not under Bureau of Land Management authority. The Committees direct the BIA to conduct an inventory of wells for which the BIA is responsible to reclaim, including cost estimates for submission to the Committees within 180 days of enactment of this Act.

The Committees direct the Secretary, or his designee, to work with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe to identify appropriate lands in Clallam County, Washington, to satisfy the requirements of section 7 of the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act (P.L. 102-495).

The Secretary, in consultation with other interested agencies, is directed to provide a report to Congress, on or before August 1, 2018, on the estimated cost of responses that are necessary under applicable Federal and State laws to protect human health and the environment with respect to any hazardous substance or hazardous waste remaining on the property as authorized by section 13 of Public Law 102-497.

*Public Safety and Justice.*—The agreement provides \$405,520,000 for public safety and justice programs. The detailed allocation table at the end of this explanatory statement has been expanded in order to more fully outline program levels. Included within Criminal Investigations and Police Services is \$1,000,000 to implement the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and \$7,500,000 to help people affected by opioid addiction. Within Detention/Corrections is a \$1,400,000 increase for recently constructed facilities that do not currently have existing program funding within the BIA budget; additional funding in future years will be considered as information becomes available. Within Law Enforcement Special Initiatives is \$3,033,000 to reduce recidivism through the Tiwahe initiative. Within Tribal Justice Support is \$2,000,000 to implement the Violence Against Women Act for both training and specific Tribal court needs, and \$13,000,000 to address the needs of Tribes affected by Public Law 83-280. Within Law Enforcement Program Management is a \$500,000 increase for the Office of Justice Services' District III Office to promote timely payments.

The Committees remain concerned about Tribal courts' needs as identified in the Indian Law and Order Commission's November 2013 report, which notes that Federal investment in Tribal justice in "P.L. 280" States has been more limited than elsewhere in Indian Country. The Committees expect the Bureau to continue to work with Tribes and Tribal organizations in these States to consider options that promote, design, or pilot Tribal court systems for Tribal communities subject to full or partial State jurisdiction under Public Law 83-280.

The Committees understand that several Tribes whose Federal recognition was terminated and then subsequently restored now face significant challenges in securing law enforcement funding through self-determination contracts. The Bureau is directed to work with affected Tribes to assess their law enforcement needs and submit a report within 120 days of enactment of this Act that details the amounts necessary to provide sufficient law enforcement capacity for them.

*Community and Economic Development.*—The agreement provides \$46,447,000 for community and economic development programs, of which: \$12,549,000 is for job placement and training and includes \$1,550,000 for the Tiwahe initiative; \$1,826,000 is for economic development; \$26,416,000 is for minerals and mining and includes \$1,000,000 for the modernization of oil and gas records including the National Indian Oil and Gas Management System (NIOGEMS); and \$5,656,000 is for community development central oversight, of which \$3,400,000 is to implement the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act, including via cooperative agreements with Tribes or Tribal organizations. The Committees understand that the NIOGEMS has been distributed to some Tribes and regional offices; the Bureau is instructed to report back within 120 days of enactment of this Act on the cost to further expand this system to more reservations and offices.

The recent high risk GAO report (GAO-17-317) found the Bureau does not properly manage Indian energy resources. The Committees request the Bureau to report back within 180 days of enactment of this Act outlining any barriers, statutory or regulatory, that impede development of these resources.

*Executive Direction and Administrative Services.*—The agreement provides \$231,747,000 for executive direction and administrative services. All budget line items are funded at fiscal year 2017 enacted levels and adjusted for fixed costs and transfers, except for human capital management and intra-governmental payments, which are funded at the requested levels.

Within 60 days on enactment of this Act, the Bureau is directed to make funds provided within executive direction available to solicit proposals from independent non-profit or academic entities to prepare a report on the likely impacts of the closure of the Navajo Generating Station power plant on affected Tribes, State and local governments and other stakeholders within the Four Corners region. In consultation with impacted Tribes, an entity shall be selected to prepare a report within 12 months of the award that (1) details potential economic impacts related to the plant's closure; and (2) identifies specific policy recommendations that would mitigate the potential economic and societal consequences of the plant's closure on affected Tribes or other stakeholders.

The Committees note that the Bureau has not yet complied with the fiscal year 2017 directive to provide a report on funding requirements associated with operating and law enforcement needs for congressionally authorized treaty fishing sites on the Columbia River. The Bureau is directed to transmit



the report no later than 30 days following enactment of this Act. The Bureau is also urged to incorporate unfunded needs for these sites as part of future budget requests.

Indian Affairs is directed to complete annual health and safety inspections and background checks at all BIE system facilities, and to submit quarterly updates on the status of such efforts to the Committees.

*Bureau of Indian Education.*—The agreement includes \$914,413,000 for the Bureau of Indian Education, the details of which are included in the expanded allocation table at the end of this explanatory statement. Tribal grant support costs continue to be fully funded. Additional details follow:

A one-time increase is provided to complete the transition to a school year funding cycle for all Tribal colleges and universities, including Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute. The Committees recognize that many Tribal colleges have significant unfunded needs, and direct the Bureau to work with Tribal leaders and other stakeholders to develop a consistent methodology for determining Tribal college operating needs to inform future budget requests. The Committees expect the methodology to address operating and infrastructure needs including classrooms and housing.

The agreement includes \$18,810,000 for early child and family development, which should be used to expand the Family and Child Education (FACE) program. The agreement rescinds \$8,000,000 from expiring prior year balances that the Bureau failed to obligate. This rescission does not impact the program's operating level for fiscal year 2018.

The Committees support efforts to revitalize and maintain Native languages and expand the use of language immersion programs. The ISEP program is expected to continue to enhance access to Native language and culture programs in Bureau-funded schools, and the Bureau shall report back within 60 days of enactment of this Act on how funding has been and can continue to be used to support these programs. In addition, \$2,000,000 is provided within Education Program Enhancements for capacity building grants for Bureau and tribally operated schools to expand existing language immersion programs or to create new programs. Prior to distributing these funds, the Bureau shall coordinate with the Department of Education and Department of Health and Human Services to ensure that Bureau investments complement, but do not duplicate, existing language immersion programs. The Committees also direct the Bureau to submit a report to the Committees within 120 days of enactment of this Act regarding the status of fiscal year 2017 funds and the planned distribution of funds in this Act.

The Johnson O'Malley program is funded at \$14,903,000. The Committees remain concerned that the distribution of funds is not an accurate reflection of the distribution of students. The Bureau is directed to report back to the Committees within 90 days of enactment of this Act on the status of updating the student counts.

The Committees remain concerned about recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports detailing problems within the K-12 Indian education system at the Department of the Interior, in particular as they pertain to organizational structure, accountability, finance, health and safety, and ultimately student performance. As the Department takes steps to reform the system, the Secretary is reminded that future support from Congress will continue to be based in large part upon successful implementation of GAO report recommendations. In particular, consistent with GAO report 13-774, the Secretary is urged to reorganize Indian Affairs so that control and accountability of the BIE system is consolidated within the BIE, to present such reorganization proposal in the next fiscal year budget request, and to submit to the Committees a corresponding updated workforce plan. Consistent with GAO testimonies 15-389T, 15-539T, 15-597T, and any subsequent reports, the Secretary is urged to personally oversee immediate actions necessary to ensure the continued health and safety of students and employees at BIE schools and facilities. The Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs is directed to report back within 60 days of enactment of this Act on the progress made towards implementing all the GAO recommendations and the current status of the reform effort.

The Committees understand the importance of bringing broadband to reservations and villages, but remain concerned about the planning process used for this type of investment. The Committees direct the agency to report back within 90 days of enactment of this Act on a scalable plan to increase bandwidth in schools, procure computers and software, and to include in this report how the Bureau is working with other Federal agencies to coordinate and plan for the technology buildout.

The BIE is encouraged to coordinate with the Indian Health Service to integrate preventive dental care and mental health care at schools within the BIE system.

The bill includes modified language limiting the expansion of grades and schools in the BIE system which allows for the expansion of additional grades to schools that meet certain criteria.

The Committees continue to encourage efforts to improve interagency coordination for the wide range of programs that affect the wellbeing of Native children and expect the Bureau to work with relevant Federal, State, local and Tribal organizations to make these programs more effective.

The Committees are concerned by the recent Government Accountability Office report (GAO-17-423) on Tribal transportation, which identified potential negative impacts of road conditions on Native student school attendance. The Committees recommend BIE take steps to improve its data collection on the cause of student absences, including data on road and weather conditions, and to report back to the Committees within 120 days of enactment of this Act regarding its actions to improve student absence data tracking and analysis.

## CONTRACT SUPPORT COSTS

The bill provides an indefinite appropriation for contract support costs, consistent with fiscal year 2017 and estimated to be \$241,600,000.

## CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

The bill provides \$354,113,000 for Construction. Details are contained in the justification submitted to the Congress and in the funding allocation table at the end of this explanatory statement, except as otherwise discussed below:

*Account-wide.*—Not later than 90 days after enactment of this Act, Indian Affairs shall submit an operating plan to the Committees detailing how fiscal year 2018 funding will be allocated and including specific projects where available and the methodology used in the prioritization. Where specific project allocations are not yet available, the plan shall provide the circumstances and Indian Affairs shall brief the Committees when project allocations are available.

*Joint Ventures.*—Indian Affairs is expected to comply with the directive in House Report 115-238 regarding the establishment of joint venture programs for schools and justice centers and modeled after the Indian Health Service's program.

*Education Construction.*—The agreement provides \$238,245,000 for schools and related facilities within the Bureau of Indian Education system and includes the following: \$105,504,000 for replacement school campus construction; \$23,935,000 for replacement facility construction; \$13,574,000 for employee housing repair; and \$95,232,000 for facilities improvement and repair. The Committees expect the increase provided for facilities improvement and repair to be used to address deficiencies identified by annual school safety inspections.

The Committees continue to expect BIA and BIE to work together to ensure that annual safety inspections are completed for all BIE schools and remain concerned that the Bureaus have not developed concrete tracking and capacity-building systems to ensure that safety issues flagged by these inspections are addressed in a timely manner. The Committees are also concerned by reports from tribally operated schools that BIE is not providing necessary training or access to funding from the Facilities Improvement and Repair program to meet urgent safety and maintenance needs. The Committees direct BIE and BIA to provide an implementation plan to the Committees to address these concerns within 120 days of enactment of this Act.

The Bureau of Indian Education is directed to report back within 60 days of enactment of this Act on the progress the Bureau has made towards implementing a long-term facilities needs assessment modeled after the Department of Defense Education Activity, as directed by House Report 114-632.

The Committees continue to strongly support innovative financing options to supplement annual appropriations and accelerate repair and replacement of Bureau schools, including through the use of construction bonds, tax credits, and grant programs.

*Public Safety and Justice Construction.*—The agreement provides \$35,309,000 for public safety and justice construction and includes the following: \$18,000,000 to restart the facilities replacement and new construction program; \$4,494,000 for employee housing; \$9,372,000 for facilities improvement and repair; \$169,000 for fire safety coordination; and \$3,274,000 for fire protection.

The Committees include funding for the replacement construction program, which has not received funding from the Bureau since fiscal year 2010, as other agencies have sought to build these facilities. The Committees also understand the Bureau currently has compiled a list of replacement facilities based upon the facilities condition index, inmate populations, and available space. It is the expectation the funding made available for this activity will utilize this list. Further, the Committees encourage the Bureau to develop a master plan that details the location and condition of existing facilities relative to the user population, and incorporates the use of existing tribally constructed facilities and regional justice centers, such as the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' Justice Center, as an efficient approach to filling gaps where additional facilities are needed. Reasonable driving distances for visitation should be taken into consideration.

*Resources Management Construction.*—The agreement provides \$67,192,000 for resources management construction programs and includes the following: \$24,692,000 for irrigation project construction; \$2,596,000 for engineering and supervision; \$1,016,000 for survey and design; \$648,000 for Federal power compliance; and \$38,240,000 for dam safety and maintenance.

The Committees are aware of the aging Indian irrigation systems and that most of these systems are in need of major capital improvement; therefore, additional funding has been included to address the infrastructure needs. Additionally, it is the Committees' understanding that these projects are consistent with those activities authorized as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (P.L. 114-322).

The Committees are concerned that there are an unknown number of dams on reservations that have not received a hazard classification, and that the current review process is behind schedule. The Committees strongly encourage the Bureau to begin the work on these dams and report back to the Committees on the best way to effectively quantify the potential pool of dams on reservations in need of a review and/or classification.

*Other Program Construction.*—The agreement provides \$13,367,000 for other programs and includes the following: \$1,119,000 for telecommunications; \$3,919,000 for facilities and quarters; and \$8,329,000 for program management, including \$2,400,000 to continue the project at Fort Peck.

## INDIAN LAND AND WATER CLAIMS SETTLEMENTS AND MISCELLANEOUS PAYMENTS TO INDIANS

The bill provides \$55,457,000 for Indian Land and Water Claims Settlements and Miscellaneous Payments to Indians, ensuring that Indian Affairs will meet the statutory deadlines of all authorized settlement agreements to date. The detailed allocation of funding by settlement is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

## INDIAN GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

The bill provides \$9,272,000 for the Indian Guaranteed Loan Program Account to facilitate business investments in Indian Country.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS (INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

The bill includes a rescission of \$8,000,000 from prior year unobligated balances within the Operation of Indian Programs account. The Bureau is directed to take the rescission from within Early Child and Family Development as detailed above.

## DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS

The agreement provides \$124,182,000 for Departmental Offices, Office of the Secretary, Departmental Operations. The Office of Valuation Services is funded at \$10,242,000. The Committees accept the proposal in the budget request to transfer the Office of Natural Resources Revenue to Department-wide Programs. The agreement includes language as requested establishing the Department of the Interior Experienced Services Program. The detailed allocation of funding by program area and activity is included in the table at the end of the statement.

*National Monument Designations.*—The Department is directed to collaboratively work with interested parties, including Congress, States, local communities, Tribal governments, and others before making national monument designations.

*American Discovery Trail.*—The Committees encourage the Secretary to work with the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, other appropriate agencies, and appropriate stakeholders, in conjunction with all relevant laws, regulations, and policies, to facilitate installing signage for the American Discovery Trail.

*Tamarisk Eradication.*—The Committees encourage the Secretary to coordinate with the Department of Agriculture, other Federal agencies, States, Tribes, private entities, and communities to establish a scientifically based and watershed-focused pilot program to eradicate tamarisk in the southwestern United States.

*Departmental Documents.*—The Committees remind the Department of the need in departmental documents that delineate Federal, State, and private land, such as acquisition boundary maps and resource management plans, to more clearly indicate that Federal land management documents apply only to Federal lands and do not apply to private land unless authorized by law and approved by the landowner.

*Tribal Energy Development.*—The Committees direct the Secretary to provide a report to the Committees within 90 days of enactment of this Act on efforts to improve the ability of Tribes to develop energy resources on tribal lands. Such report should address any potential obstacles, including statutory or regulatory, to full resource utilization.

*Conservation Partnerships.*—The Committees continue to support the partnership between the Department and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps and Public Lands Corps which engage youth and veterans in protecting, restoring, and enhancing America's great outdoors.

*Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT).*—The agreement includes funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for fiscal year 2018 in Section 118 of Title I General Provisions.

*National Park Fees.*—The Secretary is directed to provide to the Committees within 60 days of enactment a report analyzing the Administration's October 24, 2017 proposal to raise national park entry fees. Such report must include a cost benefit analysis and evaluation of the impact on accessibility to the parks.

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## INSULAR AFFAIRS ASSISTANCE TO TERRITORIES

The agreement provides \$96,870,000 for Assistance to Territories. The detailed allocation of funding is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

The agreement recognizes that the Office of Insular Affairs funds important efforts to improve education, health, infrastructure, judicial training, and economic sustainability in the Insular areas and expects funds to continue to be awarded accordingly. Additionally, the Office is directed to continue to award noncompetitive technical assistance funds to support investments in civic education programs for Insular Area students.

*U.S. Virgin Islands Hurricane Impacts.*—The Committees continue to be concerned about the catastrophic impacts of Hurricane Irma to the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Committees recognize that the Office will play an important role in long-term disaster recovery and direct the Office to continue to provide information to the Committees on recovery needs.

#### COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION

The agreement provides \$3,363,000 for Compact of Free Association. The detailed allocation of funding is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

#### OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The bill provides \$66,675,000 for the Office of the Solicitor. The detailed allocation of funding is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

#### OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The bill provides \$51,023,000 for the Office of Inspector General. The detailed allocation of funding is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

#### OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS FEDERAL TRUST PROGRAMS (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

The agreement provides \$119,400,000 for the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians, as requested. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

DEPARTMENT-WIDE PROGRAMS  
WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT  
(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The agreement provides a total of \$948,087,000 for Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Management. Of the funds provided, \$389,406,000 is for suppression operations. The bill fully funds wildland fire suppression at the 10-year average.

*Fuels Management.*—The agreement provides \$184,000,000 for fuels management activities.

*Joint Fire Science.*—The Committees support continued research on unique ecosystems, such as boreal forests and tundra ecosystems, through Joint Fire Science.

*Unmanned Aerial Systems.*—The Department, as the lead agency in piloting and demonstrating the potential for unmanned aerial systems (UAS) to assist in wildland fire suppression, is directed to work with the Forest Service and the Federal Aviation Administration's Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems to continue evaluating these systems' use and to develop an overall strategy for integrating this additional tool into the Federal firefighting mission. The Committees encourage the Department to expand the use of UAS in the field, as appropriate.

CENTRAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FUND

The agreement provides \$10,010,000 for the Central Hazardous Materials Fund.

NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION  
NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FUND

The agreement provides \$7,767,000 for the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Fund. The detailed allocation of funding by activity is included in the table at the end of this explanatory statement.

WORKING CAPITAL FUND

The agreement provides \$62,370,000 for the Department of the Interior, Working Capital Fund.

OFFICE OF NATURAL RESOURCES REVENUE

The agreement provides \$137,757,000 for the Office of Natural Resources Revenue. The Committees accept the proposal to create a separate account for the Office of Natural Resources Revenue.



GENERAL PROVISIONS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The agreement includes various legislative provisions affecting the Department in Title I of the bill, "General Provisions, Department of the Interior." The provisions are:

Section 101 provides Secretarial authority for the intra-bureau transfer of program funds for expenditures in cases of emergencies when all other emergency funds are exhausted.

Section 102 provides for the Department-wide expenditure or transfer of funds by the Secretary in the event of actual or potential emergencies including forest fires, range fires, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, storms, oil spills, grasshopper and Mormon cricket outbreaks, and surface mine reclamation emergencies.

Section 103 provides for the use of appropriated funds by the Secretary for contracts, rental cars and aircraft, telephone expenses, and other certain services.

Section 104 provides for the expenditure or transfer of funds from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education, and the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians, for Indian trust management and reform activities.

Section 105 permits the redistribution of Tribal priority allocation and Tribal base funds to alleviate funding inequities.

Section 106 authorizes the acquisition of lands for the purpose of operating and maintaining facilities that support visitors to Ellis, Governors, and Liberty Islands.

Section 107 continues Outer Continental Shelf inspection fees to be collected by the Secretary of the Interior.

Section 108 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to continue the reorganization of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement in conformance with Committee reprogramming guidelines.

Section 109 provides the Secretary of the Interior with authority to enter into multi-year cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations for long-term care of wild horses and burros.

Section 110 addresses the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's responsibilities for mass marking of salmonid stocks.

Section 111 modifies a provision addressing Bureau of Land Management actions regarding grazing on public lands.

Section 112 allows the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education to more efficiently and effectively perform reimbursable work.

Section 113 addresses the humane transfer of excess wild horses and burros.

Section 114 provides remaining payments to the Republic of Palau pursuant to the Compact of Free Association requirements.

Section 115 provides for the establishment of a Department of the Interior Experienced Services Program.

Section 116 designates land located within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve as the “Jay S. Hammond Wilderness.”

Section 117 addresses National Heritage Areas.

Section 118 provides fiscal year 2018 funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program.

Section 119 addresses Morristown National Historical Park.

Section 120 addresses the issuance of rules for sage-grouse.

Section 121 incorporates by reference Section 7130 (Modification of the Second Division Memorial); and Section 7134 (Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park) of S. 1460 (Energy and Natural Resources Act of 2017) of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, as well as H.R. 1281 as introduced in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress (A bill to extend the authorization of the Highlands Conservation Act) and H.R. 4134 as introduced in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress (Cecil D. Andrus-White Clouds Wilderness Re-designation Act).

Section 122 provides for mineral withdrawal of certain lands subject to valid existing rights.

## TITLE II – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The bill provides \$8,058,488,000 for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The bill does not support reductions proposed in the budget request unless explicitly noted in the explanatory statement.

*Congressional Budget Justification.*—The Agency is directed to continue to include the information requested in House Report 112-331 and any proposals to change State allocation formulas that affect the distribution of appropriated funds in future budget justifications.

*Reprogramming and Workforce Reshaping.*—The agreement does not include any of the requested funds for workforce reshaping. Further, the Committees do not expect the Agency to consolidate or close any regional offices in fiscal year 2018. The Agency is held to the reprogramming limitation of \$1,000,000 and should continue to follow the reprogramming directives as provided in the front of this explanatory statement. It is noted that such reprogramming directives apply to proposed reorganizations, workforce restructure, reshaping, transfer of functions, or downsizing, especially those of significant national or regional importance, and include closures, consolidations, and relocations of offices, facilities, and laboratories.

Further, the Agency may not use any amount of deobligated funds to initiate a new program, office, or initiative, without the prior approval of the Committees. Within 30 days of enactment of this Act, the Agency is directed to submit to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations its annual operating plan for fiscal year 2018, which shall detail how the Agency plans to allocate funds at the program project level.

*Other.*—It is noted that the current workforce is below the fiscal year 2017 level, therefore, the agreement includes rescissions in the Science and Technology and Environmental Programs and Management accounts that capture expected savings associated with such changes. The Agency is directed to first apply the rescissions across program project areas to reflect routine attrition that will occur in those program project areas in fiscal year 2018 and then to reflect efficiency savings in a manner that seeks, to the extent practicable, to be proportional among program project areas. Amounts provided in this Act are sufficient to fully fund Agency payroll estimates. The Committees understand that the Agency routinely makes funding payroll requirements a top priority, and the Committees expect the Agency will continue to do so as it executes its fiscal year 2018 appropriation and applies the rescissions.

The Committees do not expect the Agency will undertake adverse personnel actions or incentive programs to comply with the rescissions nor do the Committees expect the Agency will undertake large-scale adverse personnel actions or incentive programs in fiscal year 2018. As specified in the bill language, the rescissions shall not apply to the Geographic Programs, the National Estuary Program, and the National Priorities funding in the Science and Technology and Environmental Programs and

Management accounts. The Agency is directed to submit, as part of the operating plan, detail on the application of such rescissions at the program project level.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For Science and Technology programs, the bill provides \$713,823,000 to be partially offset by a \$7,350,000 rescission for a net discretionary appropriation of \$706,473,000. The bill transfers \$15,496,000 from the Hazardous Substance Superfund account to this account. The bill provides the following specific funding levels and direction:

*Indoor Air and Radiation*—The bill provides \$5,997,000 and funding for the radon program is maintained at not less than the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Research: National Priorities*.—The bill provides \$4,100,000 which shall be used for extramural research grants, independent of the Science to Achieve Results (STAR) grant program, to fund high-priority water quality and availability research by not-for-profit organizations who often partner with the Agency. Because these grants are independent of the STAR grant program, the Agency should strive to award grants in as large an amount as is possible to achieve the most scientifically significant research. Funds shall be awarded competitively with priority given to partners proposing research of national scope and who provide a 25 percent match. The Agency is directed to allocate funds to grantees within 180 days of enactment of this Act.

*Additional Guidance*.—The agreement includes the following additional guidance:

*Alternatives Testing*.—The Agency is directed to follow the guidance contained under this heading in House Report 115-238 and to also include in its report to the Committees information and analysis related to potential barriers or limitations on the use of alternative test methods and to ensure that any future plans address such barriers or limitations, particularly as they relate to susceptible populations.

*Computational Toxicology*.—The Committees support the Agency's computational toxicology research activities to advance the next generation of risk assessment methods, including for prioritization, screening and testing under the Lautenberg Chemical Safety Act (LCSA). Such research activities must be carried out following the requirements of the LCSA to ensure that alternative test methods "provide information of equivalent or better scientific quality and relevance" and to protect susceptible subpopulations from unreasonable risk. The Agency's National Center for Computational Toxicology (NCCT) is encouraged to expand its collaborations with scientific experts outside of the Agency to advance development and use of human biology-based experimental and computational approaches for chemical assessments.

The Committees direct the Agency to develop the strategic plan on alternative methods and testing strategies required by the LCSA utilizing the leadership of the Director of Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT), the Director of NCCT, the Director of the National Toxicology Program (NTP), and the Director of the National Center for Environmental Assessment (NCEA). The process for developing this strategic plan shall include requests for information from the scientific community and the public and two or more public meetings or workshops. The Agency shall circulate the draft strategic plan for public review and comment, revise the plan to address comments and then issue the strategic plan, which shall include an appendix documenting response to, and disposition of, public comments. In addition, NCCT, OPPT, NTP, and NCEA shall each assign 1 FTE to collaborate on evaluating computational toxicology, in vitro methods and alternative test methods for specific scientifically-valid applications by OPPT for implementation in the LCSA. The Committees request the Agency to provide a status report on these activities no later than September 30, 2018.

*Enhanced Aquifer Use.*—The Agency is directed to continue following the guidance contained in Senate Report 114-281 in addition to the guidance contained in House Report 115-238 directing the Agency to coordinate with other Federal research efforts in this area.

*Integrated Risk Information System.*—The agreement continues to provide funding for the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) program at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level and direction that the program continues within the Office of Research and Development. The Committees remain concerned that the program has appeared on the ~~General~~ Accountability Office's (GAO) High Risk List since 2008. The Committees are aware of progress made by the Agency to implement the 2011 National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Chapter 7 and 2014 NAS report recommendations for the IRIS program, but remain concerned that the recommendations have not been fully implemented. The Committees note that the Agency and the NAS held a workshop in February 2018 to review advances made to the IRIS process, and that an NAS report on IRIS' progress is forthcoming. The Committees are encouraged that the program indicated its willingness to more closely align the development of risk assessments with stated regulatory priorities of the Agency, and believes that these efforts will make the assessments more relevant. The Committees understand that the program intends to continue the development of new methodologies and technologies to enhance the development of future IRIS assessments and encourages the program to do so, while also encouraging the program to ensure that all IRIS methodologies attain the highest scientific rigor. Finally, the Committees urge the expedited completion of the IRIS handbook and direct that the public be afforded an opportunity to provide comment on the handbook before it is placed in use.

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*National Air Toxics Trends Station Network.*—The agreement maintains funding for the National Air Toxic Trends Station Network, which tracks air pollution trends at 27 stations across the country, at

the fiscal year 2017 enacted level to accommodate the network's ongoing activities to gather consistent, high-quality monitoring data on hazardous air pollutants across the country.

*Nanomaterials Research.*—The Agency should continue to follow the direction included in Senate Report 114-281 and seek to maximize collaborative research efforts with the Food and Drug Administration.

*Partnership Research.*—The Committees encourage the Agency to continue leveraged partnerships with not-for-profit institutions that often partner with the Agency, industry, and affected stakeholders to produce independent science and evaluate the effectiveness of environmental regulations relating to unconventional oil and gas development. The study should be used to provide credible science, of national scope, relating to unconventional oil and gas development. Within available funds, the Agency is directed ~~use at least \$1,000,000 to partner on such a study during fiscal year 2018.~~ (to

*STAR Grants.*—The agreement provides funds to continue the Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program and the Committees direct the Agency to distribute grants consistent with fiscal year 2017. Within 90 days of enactment of this Act, the Committees direct the Agency to provide a briefing on its plans for the program in fiscal year 2018. (not less than

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS AND MANAGEMENT (INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For Environmental Programs and Management, the bill provides \$2,643,299,000 to be partially offset by a \$45,300,000 rescission for a net discretionary appropriation of \$2,597,999,000. The bill provides the following specific funding levels and direction:

*Clean Air.* —The agreement maintains funding for the EnergySTAR program at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. In 2009, the Agency and the Department of Energy (DOE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to the EnergySTAR Program, which shifted some functions related to home appliance products from the DOE to EPA. The Agency shall work with the DOE to review the 2009 MOU and report to the Committees within 90 days of enactment of this Act on whether the expected efficiencies for home appliance products have been achieved.

Further, the Committees do not support the proposed termination of voluntary programs, including Natural GasSTAR, AgSTAR, the Combined Heat and Power Partnership, and other partnership programs where EPA works collaboratively with nongovernmental entities to identify beneficial methods to reduce emissions, reduce pollution, or increase efficiency. The Committees also maintain both program areas related to stratospheric ozone at not less than the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Environmental Protection: National Priorities.*—The bill provides \$12,700,000 for a competitive grant program to provide technical assistance for improved water quality or safe drinking water, adequate waste water to small systems or individual private well owners. The Agency shall provide \$10,000,000 for the Grassroots Rural and Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act, for activities specified under section 1442(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j–1(e)(8)). The Agency is also directed to provide \$1,700,000 for grants to qualified not-for-profit organizations for technical assistance for individual private well owners, with priority given to organizations that currently provide technical and educational assistance to individual private well owners. The Agency is directed to provide on a national and multi-State regional basis, \$1,000,000 for grants to qualified organizations, for the sole purpose of providing onsite training and technical assistance for wastewater systems. The Agency shall require each grantee to provide a minimum 10 percent match, including in kind contributions. The Agency is directed to allocate funds to grantees within 180 days of enactment of this Act.

The Committees understand the Agency has made a decision to put out a multi-year Request for Applications for fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018 without expressed approval from the Committees. The Committees expect the Agency to formally consult on similar decisions in the future.

*Geographic Programs.*—The bill provides \$447,857,000, as distributed in the table at the end of this division, and includes the following direction:

*Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.*—The bill provides \$300,000,000 and the Agency shall continue to follow the direction as provided in House Report 112-589 and in Senate Report 114-281 related to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Additionally, the Committees encourage Agency funds for Great Lakes projects to be made available for projects in the historic Great Lakes Basin, which includes the Chicago River Watershed.

*Chesapeake Bay.*—The bill provides \$73,000,000 and the Agency shall allocate funds consistent with the direction under this heading in Senate Report 114-281.

*Gulf of Mexico.*—The bill provides \$12,542,000 for the Gulf of Mexico Geographic Program where hypoxia is a growing cause for concern. The Committees direct the Agency to coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Gulf States, and other State, local and private partners to leverage greater resources toward conservation projects on working-lands within the Gulf Region and Mississippi River Basin. The Agency is directed to distribute funds in the same manner as fiscal year 2017.

*Lake Champlain.*—The bill provides \$8,399,000 for the Lake Champlain program. From within the amount provided, \$4,399,000 shall be allocated in the same manner as fiscal year 2017 and \$4,000,000 shall be for otherwise unmet needs necessary to implement the Agency's 2016 Phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Load Plan for Lake Champlain for projects and work identified in the State implementation plan.

*Puget Sound.*—The bill provides \$28,000,000 and the Agency shall follow the direction under this heading in House Report 115-238.

*Northwest Forest Program.*—The Northwest Forest Program is funded at not less than the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*South Florida Program.*—The agreement maintains funding for the South Florida Program and directs the Agency to allocate funds in the same manner as fiscal year 2017.

*Indoor Air and Radiation.*—The agreement maintains funding for the radon program at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level and funds have been included for Radiation Protection and Reduce Risks from Indoor Air programs.

*Information Exchange/Outreach.*—The agreement includes funding for tribal capacity building equal to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level, and the Agency is directed to use environmental education funds for the smart skin care program, similar to prior years. The agreement also provides for the Small Minority Business Assistance program to be continued.

*International Programs.*—The bill provides \$15,400,000 and includes funds to maintain the U.S.-Mexico Border program at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Legal/Science/Regulatory/Economic Review.*—The bill provides \$111,414,000, equal to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. Within that amount, Integrated Environmental Strategies is funded at the fiscal year 2017 level, so that the Agency can continue to provide locally-led, community-driven technical assistance to communities in partnership with localities, States, and other Federal agencies.

*Official Reception and Representation Expenses.*—The bill provides necessary funding for the Agency's Commission on Environmental Cooperation meeting in fiscal year 2018.

*Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.*—The bill provides \$109,377,000. Of the funds provided under this section, \$6,000,000 should be allocated for the purpose of developing and implementing a Federal permit program for the regulation of coal combustion residuals in nonparticipating States, as authorized under section 4005(d)(2)(B) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 6945(d)(2)(B)). The Committees also reiterate the importance of additional language included in House Report 115-238 related to coal combustion residuals and recognize that additional State grants may be necessary as States work to implement permit programs as authorized under section 2301 of the WIIN Act (Public Law 114-322).

Additionally, the Committees continue to support the Waste Minimization and Recycling program, and the Agency is encouraged to use funds from within the program to help public entities demonstrate community anaerobic digester applications to municipal solid waste streams and farm needs such as capturing excess phosphorus.



*Toxics Risk Review and Prevention.*—The bill provides \$92,521,000 and maintains funding for the Pollution Prevention program and the Lead Risk Reduction program.

*Water: Ecosystems.*—The bill provides \$47,788,000. From within the amount provided, \$26,723,000 has been provided for the National Estuary Program (NEP) grants as authorized by section 320 of the Clean Water Act. This amount is sufficient to provide each of the 28 national estuaries in the program with a grant of at least \$600,000.

Further, in the Administrative Provisions section, the Committees direct that \$1,000,000 in competitive grants be made available for additional projects, and encourages the Agency to work in consultation with the NEP directors to identify worthy projects and activities.

*Water Quality Protection.* —The bill provides \$210,417,000 and maintains funding for the WaterSENSE program at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

*Additional Guidance.*—The agreement includes the following additional guidance:

*Chesapeake Bay.*—The Committees note the agreements signed by the Agency, States and other stakeholders to locate a Chesapeake Bay Liaison Office in Annapolis, Maryland to facilitate coordination among jurisdictions and from participating Federal agencies in support of the Chesapeake Bay Program. Currently, the Chesapeake Bay Program Office is located in Annapolis, per the agreement, and houses staff from the Chesapeake Bay Program, five Federal agencies and 35 non-Federal partners in order to facilitate program coordination. The Committees note and appreciate the commitment made by the Agency to locate the office in, or immediately adjacent to, Annapolis, in compliance with the signed agreements and to also ensure that the future office space will continue to accommodate all of the current Chesapeake Bay Program Office participants. The Committees direct the Agency to completely fulfill those commitments and to keep the Committees fully apprised of progress in each step of the lease process.

*Coal Refuse-Fired Electrical Generating Units.*—In its rulemaking on New Source Performance Standards (NSPS), the Agency provided a separate subcategory for SO<sub>2</sub> emissions standards for owners and operators of affected coal refuse-fired facilities combusting 75 percent or more coal refuse on an annual basis. In the subsequent rulemaking, “National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants from Coal- and Oil-Fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units,” (the MATS rule) the Agency did not provide a separate subcategory for coal refuse-fired Electric Generating Units (EGUs). It is noted that some stakeholders believe that the NSPS standard appropriately recognizes the multimedia environmental benefits provided by coal refuse-fired EGUs and that the high sulfur content present in coal refuse presents economic and technical difficulties in achieving the same acid gas standards as for coal. The Agency should consider revising the MATS Rule as soon as practicable to provide a separate category for

coal refuse-fired EGUs for purposes of the acid gas requirement and its SO<sub>2</sub> surrogate consistent with the NSPS.

*Diesel Generators in Remote Alaska Villages.*—Under 40 CFR 60.4216, diesel generators purchased after Model Year 2014 are required to have a diesel particulate filter if they are used as the primary power generator. The Committees understand that these filters have a high failure rate in harsh weather conditions and that repair of the filters can be difficult and expensive. The Committees direct the Agency to reexamine 40 CFR 60.4216 and consider exempting these Villages from the diesel particulate filter requirement.

*Ecolabels for Federal Procurement.*—Multiple forest certification systems have been recognized throughout the Federal government as supporting the use of sustainable products in building construction and other uses. The Committees are concerned that the Agency's efforts have not acknowledged many of these certification systems and are therefore limiting the procurement of some products that may be sustainable. The Committees understand that the Agency's Wood/Lumber product category recommendation is currently under review. The Committees direct the Agency to align its Wood/Lumber recommendation with the provisions of the USDA BioPreferred program.

*Elk River.*—The Committees encourage the Agency, in coordination with the Department of State and other Federal agencies, to work with State, local, and Tribal partners on efforts to reduce selenium, sulfates, nitrates and other harmful contaminants in the Kootenai Watershed, to which the Elk River is a tributary. The Agency is directed to brief the Committees on its efforts within 180 days of enactment of this Act.


*Exempt Aquifers.*—The Agency shall follow the guidance contained under this heading in House Report 115-238.

*Fish Grinding.*—Under a Clean Water Act general permit, onshore seafood processors in Alaska are allowed to grind and discharge ~~of~~ seafood waste. The permit requires that all seafood waste be ground to a size of no more than one-half inch in any dimension. Unfortunately, in some instances, the best available technology is unable to achieve a half inch grind dimension on a consistent basis due to the malleable nature of fish waste. The Agency should develop a policy to ensure that fish processors using the best available technology and/or best conventional practice will be considered in compliance. Additionally, processing vessels operating in waters off-shore of Alaska are subject to the same one-half inch grinding requirement even though there are no documented water quality issues that require such grinding. The Agency should exempt offshore processing vessels from the requirement.

*Glider Kits.*—The Committees understand the Agency has announced plans to revisit portions of its Phase 2 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions and Fuel Efficiency Standards for Medium- and Heavy-

Duty Engines. Upon completion of the review, the Agency is directed to update the Committees on the matter.

*Integrated Planning.*—The Agency is encouraged to continue using an integrated planning approach to enhance flexibility for communities struggling to meet compliance costs mandated under the Clean Water Act (CWA) as well as the Agency's efforts to consider a community's ability to pay for compliance costs when determining permitting actions under the CWA. The Agency is directed to maintain technical assistance and outreach to communities seeking to develop and implement an integrated planning approach to meeting Clean Water Act requirements. Further, the Committees urge the Agency to implement integrated planning measures through a flexible permit process rather than enforcement actions and consent decrees.

*Interagency Consultations.*—The Agency is directed to continue following the requirements in Senate Report 114-281 regarding consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture related to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. 

*Pesticides Registration Improvement Act.*—The agreement provides additional funding for compliance with the Pesticides Registration Improvement Act. The Committees direct the Agency to comply with the fiscal year 2017 quarterly reporting requirement related to previously collected maintenance fees that are currently unavailable for obligation. To ensure the Committees have the most accurate information regarding this issue, the Agency is directed to provide a briefing within 30 days of enactment of this Act.

*Public Access to Research.*—The Agency released its Plan to Increase Access to Results of EPA-Funded Scientific Research on November 29, 2016. The Committees urge the Agency to continue its efforts towards full implementation of the plan, and directs the Agency to provide an update on its efforts within 60 days of enactment of this Act.

*Regulation of Groundwater.*—Since enactment in 1972, the Clean Water Act (CWA) has regulated impacts to navigable waters, while regulation of groundwater has remained outside of the Act's jurisdiction. Instead, legislative history surrounding the CWA indicates that Congress intended for groundwater pollution to be regulated through CWA's nonpoint source programs and other Federal and State laws. For example, releases into groundwater from solid waste units are regulated at a Federal level by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Recently, some courts have imposed a broad view of CWA liability based on a theory of hydrological connection between groundwater and surface water. Other courts have taken a more narrow view and have focused on statutory distinctions between surface water and groundwater. The Committees are aware that the Agency has requested comment on its previous statements "regarding the Clean Water Act (CWA) and whether pollutant discharges from point sources that reach jurisdictional surface waters via groundwater or other subsurface flow that has a

direct hydrologic connection to the jurisdictional surface water may be subject to CWA regulation.” After completing the public comment process, the Committees encourage the Agency to consider whether it is appropriate to promulgate a rule to clarify that groundwater releases from solid waste units are regulated under RCRA and are not considered point sources, and, that releases of pollutants through groundwater are not subject to regulation as point sources under the CWA. The Agency is directed to brief the Committees about its findings and any plans for future rulemaking.

*Small Refinery Relief.*—The Committees continue the directive contained in Senate Report 114–281 related to small refinery relief. The Agency is reminded that, regardless of the Department of Energy’s recommendation, additional relief may be granted if the Agency believes it is warranted.

*Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Risk Evaluations.*—Under the agreement, the Agency is directed to implement the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act in a manner that reflects the best available science as now required under TSCA section 26.

*Agricultural Operations.*—The Committees note that Congress never intended the Solid Waste Disposal Act to govern animal or crop waste, manure, or fertilizer, or constituents derived from such sources. The Agency’s longstanding regulations accurately reflect Congress’ intent not to regulate manure and crop residues under the Solid Waste Disposal Act, and the Committees support legislative efforts to clarify and codify the treatment of agricultural byproducts under the Solid Waste Disposal Act.

## HAZARDOUS WASTE ELECTRONIC MANIFEST SYSTEM FUND

The bill provides \$3,674,000 which is expected to be fully offset by fees for a net appropriation of \$0. The Committees continue to support the expeditious development of a system that would allow for the electronic tracking of hazardous waste shipments pursuant to Public Law 112–195.

The Committees realize the Agency is transitioning from the developmental phase to the implementation phase for the E-Manifest System. Therefore, the Committees urge the Agency to use an adequate portion of funding to begin the implementation of the Application Program Interface System which will allow hazardous waste treatment, storage, transport and disposal facilities to interface their computer systems with those of EPA to upload and download manifest and other important information related to full scale implementation of the system.

## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

The bill provides \$41,489,000 for the Office of Inspector General.

## BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

The bill provides \$34,467,000 for Buildings and Facilities.

## HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SUPERFUND (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The bill provides \$1,091,947,000 for the Hazardous Substance Superfund account and includes bill language to transfer \$8,778,000 to the Office of Inspector General account and \$15,496,000 to the Science and Technology account. When combined with an additional \$54,389,000 for the Superfund Remedial program and an additional \$8,611,000 for the Superfund Emergency Response and Removal program in a general provision in Title IV, the bill provides a total of \$1,154,947,000 for the Hazardous Substance Superfund. The bill provides the following additional direction:

*Enforcement.*—The agreement provides \$166,375,000 for Superfund enforcement, equal to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. The Committees do not concur with the proposed elimination of financial support to the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Agency is directed to continue financial support of the DOJ in fiscal year 2018 at a level that will ensure the DOJ can continue to initiate and prosecute civil, judicial, and administrative site remediation cases and ensure that responsible parties perform cleanup actions at sites where they are liable.

*Additional Guidance.*—The Committees have provided the following additional guidance with respect to funding provided under this account:

*Baseline Testing Study.*—The Committees direct the Agency to work with the Municipality of Vieques to partner with a University-led coalition, which shall include a School of Public Health, to conduct research to facilitate the effective testing, evaluation, quantification and mitigation of the toxic substances in the soil, seas, plant, animal and human population of Vieques. This effort will fill an information void at this site, which functioned as a military training installation for decades, and serve as the baseline study for all potential future mitigation efforts.

*Contaminants of Emerging Concern.*—The bill provides \$181,306,000 in base funds for Emergency Response and Removal activities. When combined with an additional \$8,611,000 in a general provision in Title IV, the bill provides a total of \$189,917,000 for Emergency Response and Removal activities. These activities should include collaborative work with State, Tribal, and local governments to help communities address contaminants of emerging concern. Furthermore, the Committees recommend that the Agency expeditiously remediate Superfund sites contaminated by these emerging contaminants, and provide technical assistance and support to States and Tribes during the remedial cleanup process.

*Financial Assurance.*—Since enactment of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) in 1980, Federal agencies like the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service have created and updated financial assurance requirements for reclamation and closure of hardrock mining facilities on Federal lands. Similarly, several States have developed financial assurance programs for mining activities occurring on private and State lands. The Committees understand that, pursuant to a Federal Register notice signed on December 11, 2017, the EPA will not impose new Federal financial assurance requirements on hardrock mining facilities.

*Sediment Guidance.*—When implementing the recommendations of the Superfund Task Force, the Agency should consider additional improvements to the consistency of the application of sediment guidance among regions. At sites expected to exceed \$50,000,000, the Committees encourage the Agency to include the Contaminated Sediment Technical Advisory Committee (CSTAG) and the National Remedy Review Board (NRRB) throughout the process and to ensure that their technical review and remedy recommendations are evaluated and considered for inclusion in the final remedy. Additionally, the Committees encourage the Agency to, consistent with National Oil and Hazardous Substances Contingency Plan, set achievable cleanup goals, broaden the use of adaptive management and early actions, explore the utility of public-private partnerships similar, expand stakeholder participation, and promote cost-effectiveness, redevelopment, and sustainability in the Superfund process.

*Tribal Guidance.*—The Committees recognize the importance of government-to-government Tribal consultation as well as the necessity to honor Tribal treaty rights and resources protected by

treaties. The Agency is directed to fully implement the Agency's Guidance for Discussing Tribal Treaty Rights to ensure Agency actions adequately consider treaty rights proactively throughout the consultation process.

#### LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK TRUST FUND PROGRAM

The bill provides \$91,941,000 for the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Program.

#### INLAND OIL SPILL PROGRAMS

The bill provides \$18,209,000 for Inland Oil Spill Programs.

#### STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

The bill provides \$3,562,161,000 for the State and Tribal Assistance Grants program and includes the following specific funding levels and direction:

*Infrastructure Assistance.*—The bill provides \$2,486,120,000 in base funds for infrastructure assistance. When combined with an additional \$650,000,000 in a Title IV general provision, the bill provides a total of \$3,136,120,000 for infrastructure assistance. The amount provided increases funding for the State Revolving Loan Funds \$600,000,000 above the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. The

agreement includes a total of \$1,693,887,000 for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund and \$1,163,233,000 for the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund.

*Assistance to Small and Disadvantaged Communities.*—Within a Title IV general provision, the bill provides \$20,000,000 to begin a grant program to help small and disadvantaged communities develop and maintain adequate water infrastructure. The program was created in section 2104 of Public Law 114-322. The Agency is directed to brief the Committees prior to publishing its request for applications related to this new grant program.

*Reducing Lead in Drinking Water.*—Within a Title IV general provision, the bill provides \$10,000,000 to begin a grant program, created in section 2105 of Public Law 114-322, to provide assistance to eligible entities for lead reduction projects. The Agency is directed to brief the Committees prior to publishing its request for applications related to this new grant program.

*Lead Testing.*—Within a Title IV general provision, the bill provides \$20,000,000 to begin a grant program for voluntary testing of drinking water for lead contaminants at schools and child care facilities, as authorized in section 2107 of Public Law 114-322. The Agency is directed to brief the Committees prior to publishing its request for applications related to this new grant program.

*Brownfields Program.*—The bill provides \$80,000,000 for brownfields grants and directs that at least 10 percent of such grants be provided to areas in which at least 20 percent of the population has lived under the poverty level over the past 30 years as determined by censuses and the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

*Use of Iron and Steel.*—The bill includes language in Title IV General Provisions that stipulates requirements for the use of iron and steel in State Revolving Fund projects, and the agreement includes only the following guidance. The Committees acknowledge that EPA may issue a waiver of said requirements for *de minimis* amounts of iron and steel building materials. The Committees emphasize that any coating processes that are applied to the external surface of iron and steel components that otherwise qualify under the procurement preference shall not render such products ineligible for the procurement preference regardless of where the coating processes occur, provided that final assembly of the products occurs in the United States.

*Diesel Emission Reductions Grants (DERA).*—The bill provides \$75,000,000 for DERA grants. For fiscal year 2018, the Committees direct the Agency to continue to make at least 70 percent of DERA grants available to improve air quality in non-attainment areas.

*Targeted Airshed Grants.*—The bill provides \$40,000,000 for targeted airshed grants to reduce air pollution in non-attainment areas. The Agency is directed to distribute the grants on a competitive basis using the same criteria as specified under this heading in the explanatory statement accompanying Division G of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31). Not later than the end of



fiscal year 2018, the Agency should provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations that includes a table showing how fiscal year 2016 and 2017 funds were allocated. The table should also include grant recipients and metrics for anticipated or actual results.

*Animas River Spill.*—The Committees concur with the Agency's decision to reconsider its previous determination to deny claims for damages from the Animas River Spill by invoking the discretionary act exemption in the Federal Tort Claims Act, but are concerned that little progress has been made on processing or paying out claims. The Committees are also concerned that the Agency is applying or may apply an inconsistent standard that discriminates against certain claimants. The Committees expect the Agency and the Federal government to take a clear and consistent position on the question of whether they are responsible for damages caused to others by the Gold King Mine release. The Committees support paying out all legitimate claims from the Judgment Fund, consistent with the Federal Tort Claims Act, and communicating all relevant aspects of the claims process clearly to all affected communities, State, local and Tribal governments, along with the Committees. Within 30 days of enactment of this Act, the Agency shall provide to the Committees a written report detailing the status of the review of the legal basis for allowing or rejecting claims and the date by which such review will be complete, the current process underway for processing claims, the status of all claims, including reconsidered claims, the Agency's complete plan for processing all claims, and any other future planned actions related to current or future claims. Finally, the bill provides \$4,000,000 for a long-term water quality monitoring program, as authorized by Public Law 114-322. The Agency is directed to continue to work in consultation with affected States and Tribes on that effort.

*Categorical Grants.*—The bill provides \$1,076,041,000 for Categorical Grants and funding levels are specified in the table at the end of this division. Within this amount, the Beaches Protection program and Radon program are both maintained at the fiscal year 2017 enacted levels. The Agency shall continue to allocate radon grants in fiscal year 2018 following the direction in House Report 114-632.

The amount also includes \$228,219,000 for the State and Local Air Quality Management grant program, and the Agency is directed to allocate funds for this program using the same formula as fiscal year 2015. The Committees understand the Office of Air and Radiation was able to provide some additional funds to the States in fiscal year 2016 using balances. The Committees encourage the Agency to do the same in fiscal year 2018 and to provide those additional funds to the regions with the highest need.

*Categorical Grant: Multipurpose Grants.*—Because the States are expected to take a leading role in compliance with environmental cleanup, the agreement provides \$10,000,000 for Multipurpose grants to States and Tribes. The Committees were disappointed with the Agency's funding formula in fiscal year 2016 because it did not provide the flexibility that Congress expected and instead gave preference to

air programs. In fiscal year 2018, the Agency is directed to give maximum flexibility to States, so that States, not the Agency, may determine where funds from this grant program are of most value.

*Categorical Grant: Nonpoint Source (Sec. 319).*—The bill provides \$170,915,000 and the Committees expect the Agency to examine the allocation formula to ensure that the resources are being spent in areas with the most pressing needs.

#### WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE AND INNOVATION PROGRAM ACCOUNT

The bill provides a total of \$63,000,000 for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program. Within base funding in Title II, the bill provides \$10,000,000 for the WIFIA program, and a Title IV general provision provides an additional \$53,000,000 for the program. By utilizing \$5,000,000 in base funds and \$3,000,000 in Title IV funds, the Agency may use up to a total of \$8,000,000 to assist with the administrative expenses for the program. The remaining \$55,000,000 in WIFIA funds is provided for direct loan subsidization which may translate into a potential loan capacity in excess of \$6,000,000,000 to eligible entities for water infrastructure projects.

Greater investment in the replacement of aging infrastructure will help mitigate nationwide issues the Committees are tracking related to contaminants such as lead and arsenic, help address Combined Sewer Overflows and Sanitary Sewer Overflows, and allow systems to improve water delivery for residents. The Committees expect that the Agency will issue loans for the first time in fiscal year 2018 and the Committees intend to closely monitor implementation.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (INCLUDING TRANSFERS AND RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

The bill continues several administrative provisions from previous years.

*Rescission.*—The bill rescinds \$96,198,000 of unobligated balances from the State and Tribal Assistance Grants account. The Agency shall calculate the requisite percent reduction necessary to rescind such amounts from new obligational authority provided to this account, both from the direct appropriation and from amounts provided in a general provision in Title IV, and apply it across program project areas by formula. The Agency is directed to submit, as part of the operating plan, detail on the application of such rescissions by program project area.

## TITLE III – RELATED AGENCIES

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## FOREST SERVICE

*Forest Service Directives.*—The Forest Service is reminded of the importance of the directives included in House Report 115-238 not specifically addressed herein, as well as the new directives in this statement, including the front matter, and the Committees encourage the Service to share this statement with all staff. The Service also is reminded to include the research report, as required by the House report, in its fiscal year 2020 budget request.

*Forest Service Accounting, Budgeting, and Management.*—The Committees appreciate the Service's efforts to improve its accounting, budgeting, and management practices and look forward to working with the Service, Office of Budget and Program Analysis, Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, and Secretary of Agriculture to continue these improvements. The agreement includes bill language and directives to further increase transparency and confidence in the Service's management of its programs and activities.

*Government Accountability Office Report.*—Over the past three fiscal years, the Committees have become increasingly concerned about the Service's lack of internal controls over budgetary resources, reimbursable agreements, and unliquidated obligations. The lack of controls indicates a weak financial system, which increases the possibility of inefficient and ineffective use, if not outright waste, fraud, and abuse, of taxpayer funds. After conducting an 18-month audit, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently made 11 recommendations in a report titled "Forest Service: Improvements Needed in Internal Control over Budget Execution Process" (GAO-18-56). While the Service is expected to implement the recommended changes as soon as practicable, Congress also recognizes the challenges of developing, updating, and implementing these important fiscal controls. As such, the Committees request that the Service work with the Committees to remedy any hindrances to their implementation.

*Standardized Budget Practices.*—The Committees continue to support the Service's efforts in centralizing and standardizing budgeting and accounting practices among the Regions and program offices and look forward to reviewing the Service's plan for updating its budget process and presentation.

*Integrated Resource Restoration Pilot Project.*—The agreement ends the Integrated Resource Restoration pilot project. The Committees remind the Service of its previous direction to adopt the best practices and methods discovered through the pilot project and to require unit, forest, region, station, and Washington Office budgets to be collaboratively developed, while reflecting the priorities established by Congress.

*Alignment of Funding and Program Goals.*—This fiscal year, Congress takes an important step to increase transparency by aligning program dollars to the accounts that best meet program goals. For example, in the past, Fire Plan Research and Development has been funded from within the Wildland Fire Management Account, yet its funding was routinely transferred to the Forest and Rangeland Research Account. This agreement appropriates funds for Fire Plan Research and Development within the Forest and Rangeland Research account and Hazardous Fuels within the National Forest System account to minimize unnecessary transfers and increase transparency.

*Cost Pools.*—The Service has been utilizing Cost Pools to pay for certain costs associated with personnel, administrative activities, facilities, and other expenses rather than utilizing an administrative account. As part of continuing efforts to improve collaboration in budgeting, the Committees have determined that ending the practice of Cost Pools in favor of more direct accounting is in the best interest of the Service and the taxpayer. The Committees are committed to working with the Service as it reviews options for replacing Cost Pools. As such, the Service is directed to develop a plan to transition away from Cost Pools, with the exception of Cost Pool 9, which occurs with this bill, and provide that plan to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 180 days of enactment of this Act.

*Cost-Pool 9.*—For 12 years, the Service has assessed program funds for facilities maintenance needs, causing the funds appropriated to programs to appear greater than they actually were. The Committees believe all facility projects should be accounted for in the facility line item, and that projects should be prioritized within that line item. As such, this agreement moves funds from programs to the dedicated facilities account. Where such changes have been made, it is noted within the account in this explanatory statement. If the Service identifies shortfalls for critical facilities maintenance needs, it is directed to submit a reprogramming request to the Committees. Additionally, the Service should reduce the size of its facilities footprint, where possible, particularly in areas where management functions can be combined while still providing comprehensive service to a geographic area.

*National Fire Plan.*—Despite more than \$5,000,000,000 in investments in hazardous fuels mitigation since the development of the National Fire Plan following the 2000 fire season, the Service has not been able to keep pace with the challenges caused by previous management decisions, a changing climate, ever-increasing costs, and an expanding wildland-urban interface, all of which exacerbate the risk of catastrophic wildfire. The Committees direct the Service to work with the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of the Interior, as well as other relevant agencies, to review and update the National Fire Plan, as needed.

*Fire Hazard Potential Mapping Initiative.*—The Committees believe the Service should more precisely and effectively target forest management activities to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires, improve the management of the national forests, and assist in protecting other Federal, State, and private

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lands. The Service is directed to develop a Fire Hazard Potential mapping tool to identify areas at a high risk for wildland fire and describe the resources that would be necessary to address the highest risk areas. The Service should cooperatively work with universities, such as the University of California and the University of Nevada, that have expertise in this area, as well as the Department of the Interior.

*Printing Costs.*—The Committees continue to be concerned about the Service's printing costs. The Service is directed to provide updated information as specified by Senate Reports 114-70 and 114-82 within 60 days of enactment of this Act. The Service should provide a justification for its costs, explain why they have not been reduced, and significantly reduce printing expenditures.

*Reprogramming.*—The Committees remind the Service to follow the letter and spirit of the reprogramming requirements in this explanatory statement and direct the Service to submit requests through the Office of Budget and Program Analysis.

*Ceratocystis Disease.*—The Service is directed to continue its collaborative efforts to respond to the emergence of Ceratocystis disease in Hawaii and Florida and to develop recommended actions.

*Puerto Rico Hurricane Recovery.*—The Committees recognize the devastating effects of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rico's natural resources, especially El Yunque National Forest, the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, and private forests, and strongly encourage the Service to utilize its expertise, working with private partners and the Government of Puerto Rico, to restore and rehabilitate the island's unique forest ecosystems.

#### OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

The bill provides \$875,000 for the Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment. In previous fiscal years, the Office was funded through the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. This action aligns funding for the Office consistent with the 2017 reorganization of U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies and offices.

#### FOREST AND RANGELAND RESEARCH

The agreement provides \$297,000,000 for Forest and Rangeland Research, including \$77,000,000 for Forest Inventory and Analysis. The Service is directed to continue important work previously funded

through the Wildland Fire Management account for Fire Plan Research and Development that significantly contributes to the understanding of wildfire regimes.

*Cost-Pool 9.*—The Committees note that funding previously assessed for Cost-Pool 9 from Forest and Rangeland Research is now accounted for in Capital Improvement and Maintenance.

*Forest Research Priorities.*—The Committees are concerned that the research program is not well aligned with the needs of the National Forest System. When assessing the value of existing programs and new proposals, significant weight should be given to projects whose findings could be incorporated into forest management decisions. Within the funds provided, the agreement includes sufficient funding to support existing academic partners focused on research and technology development to create new and expanded markets and to advance high-value, high-volume wood markets; wood bridge and other infrastructure needs in rural areas; bottomland hardwood plantation management research; and forest monitoring cooperatives in the Northern Region.

*Research Reports.*—The Committees direct the Service to cease publishing, within 30 days of enactment of this Act, paper copies for public distribution of science and research accomplishment reports and to redirect these funds to priority research projects, consistent with reprogramming requirements.

#### STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY (INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

The agreement provides \$335,525,000 for State and Private Forestry.

*Cooperative Forestry Activities.*—The Committees direct the Service to continue to utilize existing partnerships with research institutions and States to fund research to establish methods, tools, and standard protocols that help quantify forest ecosystem services. Additionally, when funding decisions are made regarding tree mortality, strong consideration should be given to spruce beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, and bark beetle infestations, which affect forests throughout the Nation.

*Forest Legacy.*—The bill provides \$67,025,000 for the Forest Legacy program. This includes \$6,400,000 for program administration and \$60,625,000 for projects. The Service should fund projects in priority order according to the updated, competitively selected national priority list submitted to the Committees and the directive contained in Division G of the explanatory statement accompanying Public Law 115–31, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017. The Committees include a rescission of \$5,938,000 in Forest Legacy funds. This funding rescission is from cost savings of some projects and funds returned from failed or partially failed projects.

*International Forestry Technical Assistance.*—The Committees acknowledge that Timor-Leste and Australia have entered into a treaty to establish a permanent maritime boundary. The Committees

recognize the increased development that will likely occur and encourage the Service to provide technical assistance, as appropriate, to Timor-Leste to protect the unique biodiversity of the region while facilitating robust economic development.

## NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM

The agreement provides \$1,923,750,000 for the National Forest System.

*Cost-Pool 9.*—The Committees note that funding previously assessed for Cost-Pool 9 from the National Forest System is now accounted for in Capital Improvement and Maintenance.

*Hazardous Fuels.*—The agreement provides \$430,000,000 for hazardous fuels management activities within the National Forest System account. With the accounting change for Cost-Pool 9, this is a \$45,500,000 increase over the fiscal year 2017 level. Within the total provided, \$15,000,000 is for biomass utilization grants, in accordance with the directions included in Senate Report 114-281. The Committees direct the Service to prioritize hazardous fuel removal projects that are critical to protecting public safety in high hazard areas in the national forests facing significant tree mortality and to increase cross-boundary collaboration with landowners near National Forest System lands and encourage the use of hazardous fuels funding for this purpose.

*Uinta National Forest.*—The Committees are concerned about the number of dead and dying trees in the Mirror Lake Scenic Byway region in the Uinta National Forest and urge the Service to evaluate the risk of wildfire to the area and target management practices accordingly.

*Grazing Fee Rates.*—The Service is directed to provide information to the Committees detailing the implications on grazing fee calculations if the Service adopted the definition of Western States as defined by Public Law 95-514.

*Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness.*—The Committees have been made aware that the majority of recreation special-use permitting activities take place in the Landownership and Access Management subaccount, previously known as Landownership Management. Given the importance of special-use permitting activities to users of our national forests and concerns about significant delays in processing requests, funding is included to increase the pace and scale of such activities. Within the funds provided for recreation, \$750,000 shall be for the maintenance of rural airstrips and \$500,000 is made available to support infrastructure and trails development and to build the capacity of local user groups and partnership organizations for all National Recreation Areas administered by the Service that were established after 1997.

*Law Enforcement.*—The agreement provides \$2,500,000 for the Service's illegal marijuana eradication and remediation efforts.

*Lake Tahoe.*—The Committees are encouraged by the work conducted in the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit and expect the Service to prioritize funding the implementation of P.L. 106-506, as amended, and to do so in consultation with affected States, local governments, and other stakeholders. Within 60 days of enactment of this Act, the Service shall report to the Committees on these activities and the funding that will be allocated in fiscal year 2018.

*Tongass National Forest.*—Without a comprehensive stand-level inventory, the transition plan described by the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan Amendment lacks the scientific basis needed for success, and no less than \$1,000,000 is provided for the continuation of the inventory currently underway. The Committees expect the Service to meet the requirements of section 705(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 539d(a)) and to consider a plan revision or new plan amendment based on the results of the inventory. Any plan revision or amendment should include a timber management program sufficient to preserve a viable timber industry in the region. Until the Service has determined, based on a completed stand-level inventory, the timing and supply of economic young growth needed for a successful final transition and whether the 2016 Forest Plan should be amended or revised, the Service is directed not to implement a final transition away from its Tongass old growth timber program to a program based primarily on young growth.

#### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

The agreement provides \$449,000,000 for Capital Improvement and Maintenance programs. This includes \$49,986,000 made available by discontinuing the use of Cost-Pool 9 and \$35,000,000 in one-time infrastructure funding to address deferred maintenance.

*Legacy Roads and Trails.*—The Committees recognize the need to remediate legacy roads and trails and direct the Service to address these projects as they rank in priority along with all other infrastructure needs from the appropriations provided for roads and trails through the Capital Improvement and Maintenance account and provide \$40,000,000 within the Roads budget line item.

*Smokejumper Bases.*—The agreement provides funds for repairs, maintenance, and upgrades at smokejumper bases to ensure operational readiness.

*Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests.*—The Committees urge the Service to address longstanding capital improvement needs in the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests, particularly those that will save the Service money while also improving the public's access and use of these forests.



*Comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan.*—The Service is directed to establish a long-term, multi-year plan to guide needed investments in buildings, facilities, transportation systems, and other infrastructure by December 30, 2018. The plan should: 1) establish a process for setting and ranking construction and maintenance priorities; 2) reflect the Service's mission, goals, and requirements; 3) identify facilities, roads, and other infrastructure that should be disposed of or decommissioned; 4) consider existing investments in planning, construction, and maintenance, as well as deferred maintenance needs; and 5) identify future needs for investment to improve the physical infrastructure and health of the national forests. The plan also should include estimated funding requirements. In future budget requests, the Service is directed to provide the Committees with a list of any proposed construction project with a cost greater than \$1,000,000.

### LAND ACQUISITION

The agreement provides \$64,337,000 for Land Acquisition. The amounts provided by this bill compared with the budget estimates by activity and project are shown in the table below, listed in priority order pursuant to the project list received for fiscal year 2018. The Service is expected to use the Critical Inholdings/Wilderness account to acquire high priority lands, such as wilderness and lands of significant value in designated conservation units, to consolidate Federal ownership. The Committees strongly encourage the Service to close projects once funds have been made available, an appraisal has been completed, and a purchase contract has been agreed to. Further instructions are contained under the Land and Water Conservation Fund heading in the front of this explanatory statement.

The Committees support the continuation of efforts to resolve the long-standing management challenges regarding school trust lands within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in the Superior National Forest in Minnesota and encourage the Service to collaborate with nonprofit partners on the private forestland exchange alternative, which will provide the added benefit of preserving valuable forestlands outside of Superior National Forest.

State	Project	Forest Unit	This Bill
CA	Trinity Divide	Shasta-Trinity	\$5,000,000
MT	Clearwater-Blackfoot Project	Lolo	5,000,000
MN	Minnesota School Trust Lands	Superior	4,000,000
MS	Mississippi Black Water Legacy	DeSoto	1,000,000
WA	WA Cascades/Yakima River Watershed	Okanogan-Wenatchee	5,000,000

AK	Admiralty Island NM Cube Cove	Tongass	4,235,000
CA	Red Hill	Sequoia	2,600,000
VA /		George Washington and	
WV	Chesapeake Bay Headwaters	Jefferson	5,000,000
MT	Green Mountain National Trails	Helena	1,000,000
TN	Tennessee Mountain Trails and Waters	Cherokee	2,500,000
OH	Appalachian Foothills	Wayne	1,800,000
VT	Rolston Rest	Green Mountain	1,800,000
FL	Florida Longleaf Pine	Osceola	3,000,000
AZ	Doll Baby Ranch	Tonto	2,900,000
NM	Heart Bar Ranch	Gila	2,500,000
OR	Pacific Northwest Streams	Rogue River-Siskiyou	1,100,000
SC	South Carolina's Conservation Legacy	Sumter	1,600,000
Subtotal, FS Land Acquisitions			50,035,000

	Budget Request	This Bill
Acquisition Management	7,000,000	7,352,000
Cash Equalization	0	250,000
Recreational Access	0	4,700,000
Critical Inholdings/Wilderness	0	2,000,000
Total, FS Land Acquisition	7,000,000	64,337,000

#### ACQUISITION OF LANDS FOR NATIONAL FORESTS SPECIAL ACTS

The agreement provides \$850,000 for the Acquisition of Lands for National Forests Special Acts.

#### ACQUISITION OF LANDS TO COMPLETE LAND EXCHANGES

The agreement provides \$192,000 for the Acquisition of Lands to Complete Land Exchanges.

#### RANGE BETTERMENT FUND

The agreement provides \$2,065,000 for the Range Betterment Fund.

## GIFTS, DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS FOR FOREST AND RANGELAND RESEARCH

The agreement provides \$45,000 for Gifts, Donations and Bequests for Forest and Rangeland Research.

## MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL FOREST LANDS FOR SUBSISTENCE USES

The agreement provides \$2,500,000 for the Management of National Forest Lands for Subsistence Uses.

## WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The agreement provides a total of \$2,880,338,000 for Forest Service Wildland Fire Management. Of the funds provided, \$1,556,818,000 is for suppression operations, which includes an additional \$500,000,000 above the 10-year average.

*Cost-Pool 9.*—The Committees note that funding previously assessed for Cost-Pool 9 from Wildland Fire Management is now accounted for in Capital Improvement and Maintenance.

*Regional Restoration.*—The agreement provides an additional \$200,000 for partnerships that enhance the Service's capacity to execute science-based forest restoration treatments to reduce the risk of wildfires and improve the health of dry forest ecosystems.

*Unmanned Aerial Systems.*—The Committees recognize Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) can aid incident commanders as well as improve the safety of firefighters and the public. As such, the Service is expected to work with the Department of the Interior and the Federal Aviation Administration's Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems to continue evaluating these systems' use and to develop an overall strategy for integrating this additional tool into the Federal firefighting mission. The Committees also recognize that certain satellite-based ground surveillance systems could significantly improve the accuracy of information provided to fire-fighters, other first responders, and communities and encourage the Service to seek opportunities to utilize these satellite systems, as appropriate, as well as other systems that help detect and monitor fire activity.

*Aviation Safety.*—The bill repurposes \$65,000,000 provided in fiscal year 2015 for the purchase of new aircraft in order to enhance firefighter mobility, effectiveness, efficiency, and the operational safety of the Service's aviation program. The funds shall be used to modernize aviation, radio, and evacuation system infrastructure; and acquire sensory equipment, UAS, and other platforms that detect and monitor fire. Projects may include replacement or upgrades of existing infrastructure at airtanker, helicopter, and smokejumper bases; replacement of equipment, including agency-owned aircraft; and

improvements in training and night air operations, but no project shall be undertaken that increases recurring program costs. Within 60 days of enactment of this Act, the Service shall provide a complete list of anticipated projects to the Committees on Appropriations utilizing this entire amount. The Committees expect these funds to be obligated in fiscal years 2018 and 2019.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE  
INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES

The agreement provides a total of \$5,537,764,000 for the Indian Health Service (IHS), of which \$3,952,290,000 is for the Services account as detailed below and in the funding allocation table at the end of this explanatory statement. All proposed cuts are restored, and increases above the fiscal year 2017 enacted levels are detailed below and in the table. The Service is reminded of the guidance and reporting requirements contained in House Report 115-238 which must be complied with unless specifically addressed to the contrary herein, as explained in the front matter of this explanatory statement.

*Current Services.*—The agreement provides \$93,935,000 to partially cover the cost of maintaining current levels of service, of which \$23,543,000 is for pay costs and \$70,392,000 is for medical inflation.

*Indian Health Care Improvement Fund.*—The agreement provides \$72,280,000 for the Indian Health Care Improvement Fund. The Committees recognize the funding disparities that exist across the Indian Health Service system and the ongoing efforts by Tribes and the Service to update the allocation formula accordingly. Upon completion of these efforts, the Service is directed to update the Committees on the resulting allocations.

*Staffing for New Facilities.*—The agreement includes \$60,336,000 for staffing newly opened health facilities, which is the full amount based upon updated estimates provided to the Committees. Funds for the staffing of new facilities are limited to facilities funded through the Health Care Facilities Construction Priority System or the Joint Venture Construction Program that have opened in fiscal year 2017 or will open in fiscal year 2018. None of these funds may be allocated to a facility until such facility has achieved beneficial occupancy status.

*Accreditation Emergencies.*—The Committees consider the loss or potential loss of a Medicare or Medicaid agreement with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) at any facility to be an accreditation emergency. The agreement includes \$58,000,000 for accreditation emergencies at an increasing number of direct service facilities, and is based upon updated and itemized information provided to the Committees on December 13, 2017. The Service is encouraged to share this information

with Tribes, and to keep Tribes and the Committees apprised of any need for significant deviations from the planned use of funds. Bill language has been added as requested to allow the use of a portion of the funds for facility expansion or renovation and staff quarters.

Of the amounts provided, no less than \$20,000,000 is directed to facilities for purchased/referred care, replacement of third-party revenues lost as a result of decertification, replacement of third-party carryover funds expended to respond to decertification, and reasonable costs of achieving recertification, including recruitment costs necessary to stabilize staffing. Primary consideration should be given but is not limited to facilities that have been without certification the longest. Such funds shall be made available to Tribes assuming operation of such facilities pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (P.L. 93-638).

The Committees are concerned by the continued occurrence of deficiencies in patient care, facilities and hospital administration at IHS facilities, including the recent identification of these deficiencies at the Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC) by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Joint Commission. It is imperative that the Service take all needed steps to ensure patient safety, improve the quality of care, and ensure that GIMC does not lose access to third-party reimbursements, which account for more than 90 percent of the facility's funding. Within 90 days of enactment of this Act, the Service is directed to provide a report to the Committees that details all actions taken to address the deficiencies identified by CMS and the Joint Commission and a list of any outstanding recommendations that require future action by GIMC or the Service to implement. The Service is expected to include its corrective action plans submitted to CMS and the Joint Commission as well as the CMS 2567 deficiency report as part of this report.

*Hospitals and Health Clinics.*—The agreement provides \$2,045,128,000 for hospitals and health clinics, including: \$36,242,000 for current services; \$43,708,000 for staffing new facilities; \$1,000,000 for retinal cameras; \$58,000,000 for accreditation emergencies as discussed above; \$11,000,000 to continue operations and maintenance of village built and tribally leased clinics; \$4,000,000 to continue domestic violence prevention; and \$1,000,000 to continue prescription drug monitoring.

*Dental Health.*—The agreement provides \$195,283,000 and includes \$5,864,000 for current services and \$6,822,000 for staffing new facilities. The Service is directed to backfill vacant dental health positions in headquarters and encouraged to coordinate with the Bureau of Indian Education to integrate preventive dental care at schools across the system.

*Mental Health.*—The agreement provides \$99,900,000 for mental health programs and includes: \$2,891,000 for current services; \$2,929,000 for staffing of new facilities; \$6,946,000 to continue behavioral health integration; and \$3,600,000 to continue the suicide prevention initiative.

*Alcohol and Substance Abuse.*—The agreement provides \$227,788,000 for alcohol and substance abuse programs and includes: \$8,220,000 for current services; \$1,215,000 for staffing new facilities; \$6,500,000 for the Generation Indigenous initiative; \$1,800,000 for the youth pilot project; and \$2,000,000 to fund essential detoxification and related services provided by the Service's public and private partners to IHS beneficiaries. The Committees expect the Service to continue its partnership with the Na' Nizhoozhi Center in Gallup, New Mexico, as directed by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, and to distribute funds provided for detoxification services in the same manner as in fiscal year 2017.

*Purchased/Referred Care.*—The agreement provides \$962,695,000 and includes \$32,327,000 for current services and \$1,538,000 for staffing new facilities. The Committees remain concerned about the inequitable distribution of funds as reported by the Government Accountability Office (GAO-12-446).

*Public Health Nursing.*—The agreement provides \$85,043,000 for public health nursing and includes \$2,702,000 for current services and \$3,640,000 for staffing new facilities.

*Health Education.*—The agreement provides \$19,871,000 for health education and includes \$724,000 for current services and \$484,000 for staffing new facilities.

*Urban Indian Health.*—The agreement provides \$49,315,000 for urban Indian health and includes \$1,637,000 for current services. The Service is expected to continue to include current services estimates for urban Indian health in future budget requests.

The Committees direct the Service to work with the Veterans Affairs on the report examining services for Indian veterans at urban clinics as outlined in House Report 115-188 accompanying the Fiscal Year 2018 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

*Indian Health Professions.*—The agreement provides \$49,363,000 for Indian health professions and includes \$18,000 for current services. Within funds, the agreement includes funding for the Quentin N. Burdick American Indians into Nursing Program, Indians into Medicine Program, and American Indians into Psychology Program at no less than fiscal year 2017 enacted levels.

*Extension Services.*—The Committees continue to be concerned about the urgent need for skilled health providers in AI/AN communities and are encouraged by the success of the University of New Mexico's Project ECHO—Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes—in delivering timely care to underserved communities. The Service shall consider how Project ECHO could support existing Indian Health Service providers, and how potential partnerships with Project ECHO could aid in the recruitment and retention of healthcare providers to IHS sites, thereby expanding the provider network and improving access to care.

*Patient Wait Times.*—The Committees are encouraged by the Service's recent focus on improving wait times for patients seeking primary and urgent care, including the August 2017 publication

of Circular No. 17-11 and related efforts to track, report, and improve patient wait times. The Committees direct the Service to provide a report to the Committees on the status of these efforts no later than 90 days after enactment of this Act. This report shall include a clear explanation of how these efforts will address GAO's recommendation in report number GAO-16-333 of setting and monitoring agency-wide standards for patient wait times in federally operated facilities and an analysis of any potential barriers to continued monitoring of wait times caused by IT infrastructure limitations or incompatibility.

The Committees request that the Service provide, no later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, a detailed plan with specific amounts identified to fully fund and implement the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, as discussed in House Report 115-238.

*Reimbursable Funding.*—This agreement directs the Service to report, within 180 days of enactment of this Act, on patient population and service growth over the past ten years and the funding sources used to provide for these medical services. The Service is to include a breakdown, by dollar amount and percentage, of funding sources which supplement appropriated dollars to cover the provision of medical services at Service operated facilities. The Committees are interested in detailed information on whether medical services have been able to expand over this time period as a result of increases in the ability to charge medical services due to new authorities outlined in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and other Federal laws. As a point of comparison, and to the extent possible, the Service shall compare these impacts across the twelve Service areas, with the degree to which patient population services in the respective States has increased.

*Quality of Care.*—The Committees are extremely concerned about the lack of access to quality healthcare for Tribes around the Nation, including the ongoing healthcare quality problems in the Great Plains. In order to address these issues, the agreement includes a pilot program and related directives to improve access to quality health services and to improve recruitment and retention of qualified medical personnel as detailed below:

*Housing Improvements.*—In addition to funds provided for staffing quarters within the Facilities Appropriation, the administrative provisions section of the bill also contains new language allowing for a program to provide a housing subsidy to medical personnel at facilities operated by the Indian Health Service. The Committees are concerned that the lack of affordable and available housing plays a significant role in the agency's personnel vacancy rates and contributes to lowering the quality of care. The Committees expect the Service to provide a plan within 90 days of enactment of this Act that details how the agency plans to use this authority in fiscal year 2018, including the measures it will use to determine whether the authority is successful and how it should be expanded in future years. The Committees have added funds for accreditation emergencies that could be made available for this purpose. The Committees also direct the Service to work with Tribes and with the Department of Housing

and Urban Development to develop a long-term strategy to address professional housing shortages in Indian Country and to ensure that the Service and its partner agencies are fully utilizing existing authorities to improve the availability of housing stock.

*Workforce Development.*—The Committees believe that expanded workforce development training for all Service personnel—including non-clinical personnel—must be part of efforts to improve healthcare quality. In addition to continuing skills development opportunities, the Committees believe that IHS should expand its efforts to provide education to all staff, and Federal employee management training to facility and area leadership that will provide employees a better understanding of their obligations to report failures in quality of care.

*Title 38 Personnel Authorities.*—The Committees are aware of significant differences between the personnel authorities used by the Service versus the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) under Title 38 of the United States Code. The Committees believe that an analysis of these differences—which include hiring and benefits authorities—may provide strategies for recruiting and retaining qualified personnel in the same rural and remote locations as the VA. The Committees direct the Service to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to analyze the differences between the two agencies' personnel authorities and to submit a report no later than 90 days after enactment of this Act that details the differences and makes specific legislative recommendations, as appropriate, to provide parity between the two agencies.

*ISDEAA Contracts.*—The Committees encourage the transfer of amounts provided to tribal organizations for the Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention Program, for the Domestic Violence Prevention Program, for the Zero Suicide Initiative, for aftercare pilots at Youth Regional Treatment Centers, and to improve collections from public and private insurance at tribally-operated facilities to such organizations through Indian Self-Determination Act compacts and contracts, and not through separate grant instruments. This will ensure that associated administrative costs will be covered through the contract support cost process.

## CONTRACT SUPPORT COSTS

The agreement continues language from fiscal year 2017 establishing an indefinite appropriation for contract support costs estimated to be \$717,970,000, which is equal to the request. By retaining an indefinite appropriation for this account, additional funds may be provided by the agency if its budget estimate proves to be lower than necessary to meet the legal obligation to pay the full amount due to Tribes. The Committees believe fully funding these costs will ensure Tribes have the necessary resources they need to deliver program services efficiently and effectively.



## INDIAN HEALTH FACILITIES

The bill provides \$867,504,000 for Indian Health Facilities. In addition to the funding allocation table at the end of this explanatory statement, the agreement includes the following details and changes relative to fiscal year 2017 enacted levels:

*Staffing for New Facilities.*—The agreement includes \$5,480,000 for staffing newly opened health facilities, which is the full amount based upon updated estimates provided to the Committees. The stipulations included in the “Indian Health Services” account regarding the allocation of funds pertain to this account as well.

*Current Services.*—The agreement provides \$4,329,000 to partially cover the cost of maintaining current levels of service, of which \$2,440,000 is for pay costs and \$1,889,000 is for medical inflation.

*Indian Health Care Improvement Fund.*—The bill includes language allowing funds in the Indian Health Care Improvement Fund to be used for activities in the Facilities account.

*Maintenance and Improvement.*—The agreement provides \$167,527,000. The Service is directed to use this increase to address the backlog of essential maintenance, alteration and repair (BEMAR) and to provide a spend plan within 60 days of enactment of this Act detailing how IHS plans to utilize this funding.

*Sanitation Facilities.*—The agreement provides \$192,033,000 for sanitation facilities construction and includes \$261,000 for current services. The Committees expect the Service to continue following its existing interpretation of criteria for the funding of new, improved, or replacement sanitation facilities.

*Health Care Facilities Construction.*—The agreement provides \$243,480,000 for health care facilities construction and includes \$15,000,000 for small ambulatory clinics and \$11,489,000 for staff quarters.

The Committees remain dedicated to providing access to health care for IHS patients across the system. The IHS is expected to aggressively work down the current Health Facilities Construction Priority System list, as well as work with the Department and Tribes to examine alternative financing arrangements and meritorious regional demonstration projects authorized under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act that would effectively close the service gap. Within 60 days of enactment of this Act, the Service shall submit a spending plan to the Committees on Appropriations that details the project-level distribution of funds provided for healthcare facilities construction.

The Committees believe that additional funds for quarters is essential to help resolve the widespread housing shortages which have contributed to high vacancy rates for medical personnel throughout the system, particularly in rural areas. These funds have been used in areas with chronic housing shortages like Alaska and the Great Plains in order to ameliorate these problems. The

Committees expect a report from the Service within 60 days of enactment of this Act on the distribution of funds.

The Service is reminded of the directive in House Report 115-238 regarding the completion and publication of a gap analysis.

The Committees strongly support the small ambulatory clinic program. This program provides another critical tool for addressing facilities maintenance and construction backlogs throughout the nation.

In advance of the opening of the Sacred Oaks Healing Center in California in late 2019, and within available funds, the Service is expected to construct a left-turn lane and make other safety improvements recommended by the Service's 2017 transportation impact study. The Service is further directed to report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 60 days of enactment of this Act regarding the status of the project.

*Facilities and Environmental Health Support.*—The agreement provides \$240,758,000 for facilities and environmental health support and includes: \$3,328,000 for current services; \$5,480,000 for staffing new facilities; and a \$5,000,000 program increase to address the increased workload in construction. The Service is expected to provide a spend plan within 60 days of enactment of this Act for the additional infrastructure funding provided above the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

#### NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

##### NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES

The agreement provides \$77,349,000 for the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

##### AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY

##### TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH

The agreement provides \$74,691,000 for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

#### OTHER RELATED AGENCIES

##### EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

##### COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The agreement provides \$3,000,000 for the Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Environmental Quality.

CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD  
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides \$11,000,000 for the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board.

OFFICE OF NAVAJO AND HOPI INDIAN RELOCATION  
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The bill provides \$15,431,000 for the Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation. The agreement continues the direction provided in the explanatory statement accompanying Division G of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017, P.L. 115-31. The Committees remain committed to bringing the relocation process to an orderly conclusion and ensuring all eligible relocatees receive the relocation benefits to which they are entitled. Consultation with all affected parties and agencies is the key to a transparent, orderly closeout. The statute provides for termination of the Office when the President determines its functions have been fully discharged. That determination requires development of a comprehensive plan. The Committees expect to receive a progress report on development of this plan within 90 days of enactment of this Act.

INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE CULTURE  
AND ARTS DEVELOPMENT  
PAYMENT TO THE INSTITUTE

The bill provides \$9,835,000 for fixed costs and academic program requirements of the Institute of American Indian Arts.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides a total of \$1,043,347,000 for all Smithsonian Institution accounts, of which \$731,444,000 is provided for salaries and expenses. The Committees maintain their longstanding commitment to the preservation of priceless, irreplaceable Smithsonian collections and have provided funds as requested for collections care and preservation. The Committees continue their longstanding support for the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC). Within amounts provided for the Salaries and Expenses account, the NMAAHC is fully funded. The Committees provide funds as requested for the Institution's Latino initiatives and support the Smithsonian Latino Center's goal of promoting the inclusion of Latino contributions in Smithsonian Institution programs,

exhibitions, collections, and public outreach. The Committees continue to urge collaboration between the Smithsonian Latino Center and appropriate Federal and local organizations in order to advance these goals and expand the American Latino presence at the Institution. Further, the Committees provide funds as requested for the Institution's Asian Pacific American initiatives and continue to support the Institution's efforts of developing programs and expanding outreach to promote a better understanding of the Asian Pacific American experience. Lastly, the agreement provides \$2,000,000 for the American Women's History Initiative within Institution-wide programs.

#### FACILITIES CAPITAL

The agreement provides \$311,903,000 for the Facilities Capital account. The recommendation includes funding to complete construction of the Dulles Storage Module at the Udvar-Hazy Center, and \$198,000,000 for the National Air and Space Museum revitalization effort.

*National Air and Space Museum Revitalization.*—The Committees support the multi-year, multi-phase renovation of the National Air and Space Museum (NASM), including the replacement of the building's façade and internal building systems. The recommendation includes \$198,000,000 for this critical revitalization effort. The Institution is directed to follow the reprogramming guidelines contained in this explanatory statement and may not redirect the use of these funds for other capital projects without prior approval of the Committees. Given the scale of the project, the Committees direct the Institution to make available to the Committees on a timely basis the most updated and comprehensive information on project and funding requirements. The Government Accountability Office is also directed to continue its review and analysis of the project's cost estimates, as directed in the Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31). The Committees urge the Smithsonian to evaluate potential partnership opportunities that may provide non-Federal funding sources to advance this and other revitalization projects. The Institution is directed to submit to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, within 60 days of enactment of this Act, a detailed list and description of projects funded within the Facilities Capital account.

#### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides \$141,790,000 for the Salaries and Expenses account of the National Gallery of Art, of which not to exceed ~~\$3,578,000~~ is for the special exhibition program.

(3,620,000)

*Harassment-Free Workplace.*—The Committees believe all ~~Federal~~ employees have the right to a harassment-free workplace and are deeply concerned by recent reports of harassment and a hostile work environment at the Gallery. The Gallery is expected to ensure it has strong and consistent anti-harassment policies in place to protect its workforce and is directed to report to the Committees within 120 days of enactment of this Act regarding specific corrective actions it is taking to preclude additional incidents from occurring in the future.

#### REPAIR, RESTORATION, AND RENOVATION OF BUILDINGS

The agreement provides \$24,203,000 for the Repair, Restoration, and Renovation of Buildings account and includes funds to complete the repairs of the East Building atrium skylights.

#### JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The agreement provides \$23,740,000 for the Operations and Maintenance account.

#### CAPITAL REPAIR AND RESTORATION

The agreement provides \$16,775,000 for the Capital Repair and Restoration account. Funds provided above the request are to address critical safety, security, and capital repair and restoration needs.

#### WOODROW WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOLARS SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides \$12,000,000 for the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

#### NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS GRANTS AND ADMINISTRATION

The agreement provides \$152,849,000 for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to continue the important work of the Endowment. Changes to the enacted level are included in the detail table accompanying this agreement, and the agency is expected to use the increases provided for direct grants to expand its Creative Forces: Military Healing Arts Network and to increase grants made available

to Tribes and to rural and underserved areas. The Committees particularly commend the NEA for its work incorporating arts therapy into the treatment of active-duty military patients, veterans, and their families through its Creative Forces: Military Healing Arts Network. This successful program places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care and increases access to therapeutic arts therapies at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, and eleven other clinical sites across the United States. The Committees support the expansion of this successful program to assist service members and their families in their recovery, reintegration, and transition to civilian life. The Committees also urge State arts agencies to explore how they can contribute to expanding arts programs for service members and their families at the local level. The Committees acknowledge there are currently vacancies on the National Council on the Arts and many members have agreed to continue to serve even though their term has expired. While the Council has the ability to operate and conduct important work, the Committees encourage the timely appointment of members. The Committees value greatly the longstanding collaborative relationship between the NEA and the States. The Committees direct that priority be given to providing services and grant funding for projects, productions, or programs that encourage public knowledge, education, understanding, and appreciation of the arts. The Committees maintain support for the 40 percent allocation for State arts agencies as allocated in previous years. Any reduction in support to the States for arts education should be no more than proportional to other funding decreases taken in other NEA programs.

#### NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES GRANTS AND ADMINISTRATION

The agreement provides \$152,848,000 for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to continue the important work of the Endowment. Changes to the enacted level are included in the detail table accompanying this agreement, and the agency is expected to use increases provided to expand its work with Tribes to preserve Native languages and culture as detailed below as well as to support other local history preservation initiatives. Funds are also provided within the Challenge Grants program to support NEH's local infrastructure and capacity building grant program. The Committees acknowledge there are currently vacancies on the National Council on the Humanities and many members have agreed to continue to serve even though their term has expired. While the Council has the ability to operate and conduct important work, the Committees encourage the timely appointment of members. The Committees commend the NEH for its support of grant programs to benefit wounded warriors and to ensure educational opportunities for American heroes transitioning to civilian life. The Committees commend the NEH for its ongoing support to American Indian and Alaska Native communities in

preserving their cultural and linguistic heritage through the Documenting Endangered Languages program and a variety of preservation and access grants that enable American Indian and Alaska Native communities to preserve cultural artifacts and make them broadly accessible. The Committees also support NEH efforts to provide educational opportunities for tribal communities through Humanities Initiatives at Tribal Colleges and Universities. The Committees commend the NEH Federal/State partnership for its ongoing, successful collaboration with State humanities councils in each of the 50 States as well as Washington, DC, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. The Committees urge the NEH to provide program funding to support the critical work of State humanities councils consistent with guidance provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31). The Committees encourage NEH to continue providing support to two popular components of the "We the People" initiative, the National Digital Newspapers Program (NDNP) and the Landmarks of American History and Culture workshop that focus on our Nation's history and culture.

#### COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides \$2,762,000 for the Commission of Fine Arts.

#### NATIONAL CAPITAL ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The agreement provides \$2,750,000 for the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs program. Grant funds provided should be distributed consistent with the established formula and eligibility requirements used in fiscal year 2017.

#### ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides \$6,400,000 for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

#### NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides \$8,099,000 for the National Capital Planning Commission.

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM  
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

The agreement provides \$59,000,000 for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Within this amount, the agreement provides \$2,000,000 for one-time capital improvement needs.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER MEMORIAL COMMISSION  
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The agreement provides \$1,800,000 for the Salaries and Expenses account.

CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION

The agreement provides \$45,000,000 for the Capital Construction account. These funds represent the final installment of construction funding necessary to complete the memorial.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

The agreement includes \$1,000,000 for the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission. The Commission shall plan, execute, and coordinate programs and activities in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage and ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guaranteed women the right to vote. The Committees encourage the Commission to work with the General Services Administration to ensure that its staffing and operating needs are addressed expeditiously once a quorum has been determined.

WORLD WAR I CENTENNIAL COMMISSION  
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The bill provides \$7,000,000 for the Salaries and Expenses account of the World War I Centennial Commission and bill language accepting additional support from any executive branch agency, as requested. No funds may be used for planning, design, or construction of a memorial. The Committees are aware of the needs associated with the upcoming World War I Centennial celebration and provide sufficient funding to ramp up previously deferred programs.

UC JC  
(Salaries and Expenses)



TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS  
(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

The agreement includes various legislative provisions in Title IV of the bill. The provisions are:

Section 401 continues a provision providing that appropriations available in the bill shall not be used to produce literature or otherwise promote public support of a legislative proposal on which legislative action is not complete.

Section 402 continues a provision providing for annual appropriations unless expressly provided otherwise in this Act.

Section 403 continues a provision providing restrictions on departmental assessments unless approved by the Committees on Appropriations.

Section 404 continues a limitation on accepting and processing applications for patents and on the patenting of Federal lands.

Section 405 continues a provision regarding the payment of contract support costs.

Section 406 addresses the payment of contract support costs for fiscal year 2018.

Section 407 continues a provision providing that the Secretary of Agriculture shall not be considered in violation of certain provisions of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act solely because more than 15 years have passed without revision of a forest plan, provided that the Secretary is working in good faith to complete the plan revision.

Section 408 continues a provision limiting preleasing, leasing, and related activities within the boundaries of National Monuments.

Section 409 restricts funding appropriated for acquisition of land or interests in land from being used for declarations of taking or complaints in condemnation.

Section 410 continues a provision addressing timber sales involving Alaska western red and yellow cedar.

Section 411 continues a provision which prohibits no-bid contracts.

Section 412 continues a provision which requires public disclosure of certain reports.

Section 413 continues a provision which delineates the grant guidelines for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Section 414 continues a provision which delineates the program priorities for the programs managed by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Section 415 requires the Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency, Forest Service and Indian Health Service to provide the Committees on Appropriations quarterly reports on the status of balances of appropriations.

Section 416 continues a provision prohibiting the use of funds to promulgate or implement any regulation requiring the issuance of permits under Title V of the Clean Air Act for carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, water vapor, or methane emissions.

Section 417 continues a provision prohibiting the use of funds to implement any provision in a rule if that provision requires mandatory reporting of greenhouse gas emissions from manure management systems.

Section 418 continues a provision prohibiting the use of funds to regulate the lead content of ammunition or fishing tackle.

Section 419 continues a provision through fiscal year 2019 authorizing the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to consider local contractors when awarding contracts for certain activities on public lands.

Section 420 extends the authorization for the Chesapeake Bay Initiative.

Section 421 extends certain authorities through fiscal year 2018 allowing the Forest Service to renew grazing permits.

Section 422 prohibits the use of funds to maintain or establish a computer network unless such network is designed to block access to pornography websites.

Section 423 extends the authority of the Forest Service Facility Realignment and Enhancement Act.

Section 424 sets requirements for the use of American iron and steel for certain loans and grants.

Section 425 prohibits the use of funds to destroy any building or structures on Midway Island that have been recommended by the U.S. Navy for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Section 426 reauthorizes funding for one year for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Section 427 provides authority for the Secretary of the Interior to enter into training agreements and to transfer excess equipment and supplies for wildfires.

Section 428 extends current authorities for operations of Indian Health Service programs in Alaska.

Section 429 addresses payment to certain hospitals.

Section 430 makes additional investments in water infrastructure priorities and Superfund emergency response, removal, and long-term cleanup remedies.

Section 431 addresses carbon emissions from forest biomass.

Section 432 addresses section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

Section 433 addresses the use of small remote incinerators in the State of Alaska.

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
-----					
TITLE I - DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR					
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT					
Management of Lands and Resources					
Land Resources:					
Soil, water and air management.....	43,609	27,034	43,609	---	+16,575
Rangeland management.....	79,000	67,753	81,000	+2,000	+13,247
Forestry management.....	10,076	10,135	10,135	+59	---
Riparian management.....	21,321	20,222	21,321	---	+1,099
Cultural resources management.....	16,131	16,365	17,131	+1,000	+766
Wild horse and burro management.....	80,555	70,719	75,000	-5,555	+4,281
-----					
Subtotal.....	250,692	212,228	248,196	-2,496	+35,968
-----					
Wildlife and Fisheries:					
Wildlife management.....	103,281	75,107	103,281	---	+28,174
Fisheries management.....	12,530	11,812	12,530	---	+718
-----					
Subtotal.....	115,811	86,919	115,811	---	+28,892
-----					
Threatened and endangered species.....	21,567	20,322	21,567	---	+1,245

89a

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
<b>Recreation Management:</b>					
Wilderness management.....	18,264	15,515	18,264	---	+2,749
Recreation resources management.....	53,465	47,234	54,465	+1,000	+7,231
Subtotal.....	71,729	62,749	72,729	+1,000	+9,980
<b>Energy and Minerals:</b>					
Oil and gas management.....	67,574	75,927	85,947	+18,373	+10,020
Oil and gas permit processing.....	6,365	5,737	7,365	+1,000	+1,628
Oil and gas inspection and enforcement.....	48,000	48,385	48,385	+385	---
Subtotal, Oil and gas.....	121,939	130,049	141,697	+19,758	+11,648
Coal management.....	10,868	19,015	11,868	+1,000	-7,147
Other mineral resources.....	10,978	12,043	12,043	+1,065	---
Renewable energy.....	29,061	16,292	28,320	-741	+12,028
Subtotal, Energy and Minerals.....	172,846	177,399	193,928	+21,082	+16,529
<b>Realty and Ownership Management:</b>					
Alaska conveyance.....	22,000	14,447	22,000	---	+7,553
Cadastral, lands, and realty management.....	51,480	45,892	52,480	+1,000	+6,588
Subtotal.....	73,480	60,339	74,480	+1,000	+14,141

896

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
<b>Resource Protection and Maintenance:</b>					
Resource management planning.....	52,125	38,437	60,125	+8,000	+21,688
Abandoned mine lands.....	20,036	9,062	20,036	---	+10,974
Resource protection and law enforcement.....	26,616	25,708	27,616	+1,000	+1,908
Hazardous materials management.....	15,463	10,780	15,463	---	+4,683
Subtotal.....	114,240	83,987	123,240	+9,000	+39,253
<b>Transportation and Facilities Maintenance:</b>					
Annual maintenance.....	39,125	36,344	39,125	---	+2,781
Deferred maintenance.....	29,201	26,474	79,201	+50,000	+52,727
Subtotal.....	68,326	62,818	118,326	+50,000	+55,508
<b>Workforce and Organizational Support:</b>					
Administrative support.....	51,139	50,368	58,694	+7,555	+8,326
Bureauwide fixed costs.....	92,649	93,176	93,176	+527	---
Information technology management.....	26,077	25,163	26,077	---	+914
Subtotal.....	169,865	168,707	177,947	+8,082	+9,240
National landscape conservation system, base program..	36,819	27,695	36,819	---	+9,124
Communication site management.....	2,000	2,000	2,000	---	---
Offsetting collections.....	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	---	---
Subtotal, Management of lands and resources.....	1,095,375	963,163	1,183,043	+87,666	+219,880

89c

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
<hr/>					
Mining Law Administration:					
Administration.....	39,696	39,696	39,696	---	---
Offsetting collections.....	-55,000	-56,696	-56,696	-1,696	---
Subtotal, Mining Law Administration.....	-15,304	-17,000	-17,000	-1,696	---
Total, Management of Lands and Resources.....	1,080,071	946,163	1,166,043	+85,972	+219,880
<hr/>					
Land Acquisition					
Land Acquisition.....	19,800	---	13,300	-6,500	+13,300
Emergencies, Hardships, and Inholdings.....	1,616	1,613	1,616	---	+3
Acquisition Management.....	2,000	1,996	2,000	---	+4
Recreational Access.....	8,000	---	8,000	---	+8,000
Total, Land Acquisition.....	31,416	3,609	24,916	-6,500	+21,307
<hr/>					
Oregon and California Grant Lands					
Western Oregon resources management.....	94,445	81,353	94,445	---	+13,092
Western Oregon information and resource data systems..	1,798	1,313	1,798	---	+485
Western Oregon transportation & facilities maintenance	9,628	6,087	9,628	---	+3,541
Western Oregon construction and acquisition.....	335	351	335	---	-16
Western Oregon national monument.....	779	696	779	---	+83
Total, Oregon and California Grant Lands.....	106,985	89,800	106,985	---	+17,185

P68

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
-----					
Range Improvements					
Current appropriations.....	10,000	10,000	10,000	---	---
Service Charges, Deposits, and Forfeitures					
Service charges, deposits, and forfeitures.....	31,050	24,595	24,595	-6,455	---
Offsetting fees.....	-31,050	-24,595	-24,595	+6,455	---
Total, Service Charges, Deposits & Forfeitures..	---	---	---	---	---
Miscellaneous Trust Funds and Permanent Operating Funds					
Current appropriations.....	24,000	24,000	24,000	---	---
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
TOTAL, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT.....	1,252,472	1,073,572	1,331,944	+79,472	+258,372
(Mandatory).....	(34,000)	(34,000)	(34,000)	---	---
(Discretionary).....	(1,218,472)	(1,039,572)	(1,297,944)	(+79,472)	(+258,372)
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

89e

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE					
Resource Management					
Ecological Services:					
Listing.....	20,515	17,122	18,818	-1,697	+1,696
Planning and consultation.....	103,079	98,755	105,679	+2,500	+6,824
Conservation and restoration.....	32,396	29,775	32,396	---	+2,621
(National Wetlands Inventory).....	(3,471)	(3,464)	(3,471)	---	(+7)
(Coastal Barrier Resources Act).....	(1,390)	(1,387)	(1,390)	---	(+3)
Recovery.....	84,032	79,563	91,032	+7,000	+11,469
Subtotal.....	240,022	225,215	247,825	+7,803	+22,610
Habitat conservation:					
Partners for fish and wildlife.....	51,776	45,884	51,633	-143	+5,749
Coastal programs.....	13,375	11,970	13,375	---	+1,405
Subtotal.....	65,151	57,854	65,008	-143	+7,154
National Wildlife Refuge System:					
Wildlife and habitat management.....	231,843	224,893	233,392	+1,549	+8,499
Visitor services.....	73,319	71,091	73,319	---	+2,228
Refuge law enforcement.....	38,054	37,929	38,054	---	+125
Conservation planning.....	2,523	---	2,523	---	+2,523
Refuge maintenance.....	138,188	136,196	139,469	+1,281	+3,273
Subtotal.....	483,927	470,109	466,757	+2,830	+16,648

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## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
<hr/>					
Conservation and Enforcement:					
Migratory bird management.....	48,105	44,001	48,421	+316	+4,420
Law enforcement.....	75,053	73,002	77,053	+2,000	+4,051
International affairs.....	15,816	14,183	15,816	---	+1,633
Subtotal.....	138,974	131,186	141,290	+2,316	+10,104
Fish and Aquatic Conservation:					
National fish hatchery system operations.....	55,418	51,942	55,822	+404	+3,880
Maintenance and equipment.....	22,920	19,882	22,920	---	+3,038
Aquatic habitat and species conservation.....	76,872	64,589	85,885	+9,013	+21,296
Subtotal.....	155,210	136,413	164,627	+9,417	+28,214
Cooperative landscape conservation.....	12,988	---	12,988	---	+12,988
Science Support:					
Adaptive science.....	10,517	---	10,517	---	+10,517
Service science.....	6,468	---	6,750	+282	+6,750
Subtotal.....	16,985	---	17,267	+282	+17,267
General Operations:					
Central office operations.....	40,569	36,965	36,965	-3,604	---
Regional office operations.....	37,722	33,574	33,574	-4,148	---
Service-wide bill paying.....	35,177	36,365	36,365	+1,188	---

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.....	7,022	5,009	7,022	---	+2,013
National Conservation Training Center.....	25,014	18,439	29,314	+4,300	+10,875
Subtotal.....	145,504	130,352	143,240	-2,264	+12,888
Total, Resource Management.....	1,258,761	1,151,129	1,279,002	+20,241	+127,873
Construction					
Construction and rehabilitation:					
Line item construction projects.....	9,482	9,093	9,093	-389	---
Bridge and dam safety programs.....	1,972	1,232	1,972	---	+740
Nationwide engineering service.....	7,161	5,475	5,475	-1,686	---
Deferred maintenance.....	---	---	50,000	+50,000	+50,000
Total, Construction.....	18,615	15,800	66,540	+47,925	+50,740
Land Acquisition					
Acquisitions.....	27,406	---	31,250	+3,844	+31,250
Emergencies, Hardships, and Inholdings.....	5,351	2,641	5,351	---	+2,710
Exchanges.....	1,500	1,197	1,500	---	+303
Acquisition Management.....	12,773	12,749	12,773	---	+24
Highlands Conservation Act Grants.....	10,000	---	10,000	---	+10,000
Recreational Access.....	2,500	---	2,500	---	+2,500
Land Protection Planning.....	465	464	465	---	+1
Total, Land Acquisition.....	59,995	17,051	63,839	+3,844	+46,788

894

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
-----					
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund					
Grants and administration:					
Conservation grants.....	10,508	10,487	12,508	+2,000	+2,021
HCP assistance grants.....	9,485	8,518	7,485	-2,000	+967
Administration.....	2,702	2,298	2,702	---	+404
Subtotal.....	22,695	19,303	22,695	---	+3,392
Land acquisition:					
Species recovery land acquisition.....	11,162	---	11,162	---	+11,162
HCP land acquisition grants to states.....	19,638	---	19,638	---	+19,638
Subtotal.....	30,800	---	30,800	---	+30,800
Total, Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund.....	53,495	19,303	53,495	---	+34,192
National Wildlife Refuge Fund					
Payments in lieu of taxes.....	13,228	---	13,228	---	+13,228
North American Wetlands Conservation Fund					
North American Wetlands Conservation Fund.....	38,145	33,600	40,000	+1,855	+6,400

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
-----					
Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation					
Migratory bird grants.....	3,910	3,900	3,910	---	+10
Multinational Species Conservation Fund					
African elephant conservation fund.....	2,582	2,101	2,582	---	+481
Rhinoceros and tiger conservation fund.....	3,440	2,798	3,440	---	+642
Asian elephant conservation fund.....	1,557	1,267	1,557	---	+290
Great ape conservation fund.....	1,975	1,607	1,975	---	+368
Marine turtle conservation fund.....	1,507	1,227	1,507	---	+280
Total, Multinational Species Conservation Fund..	11,061	9,000	11,061	---	+2,061
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants					
State wildlife grants (formula).....	52,000	48,919	53,000	+1,000	+4,081
State wildlife grants (competitive).....	6,362	---	6,362	---	+6,362
Tribal wildlife grants.....	4,209	3,917	4,209	---	+292
Total, State and tribal wildlife grants.....	62,571	52,836	63,571	+1,000	+10,735
=====					
TOTAL, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.....	1,519,781	1,302,619	1,594,646	+74,865	+292,027
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89

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
<b>NATIONAL PARK SERVICE</b>					
Operation of the National Park System					
Park Management:					
Resource stewardship.....	328,955	301,928	334,437	+5,482	+32,509
Visitor services.....	252,103	223,785	255,683	+3,580	+31,898
Park protection.....	356,643	338,198	362,226	+5,583	+24,028
Facility operations and maintenance.....	778,584	685,899	810,019	+31,435	+124,120
Park support.....	528,066	496,103	536,032	+7,966	+39,929
Subtotal.....	2,244,351	2,045,913	2,298,397	+54,046	+252,484
External administrative costs.....	180,667	179,572	179,572	-1,095	---
Total, Operation of the National Park System....	2,425,018	2,225,485	2,477,969	+52,951	+252,484
National Recreation and Preservation					
Recreation programs.....	589	---	---	-589	---
Natural programs.....	13,581	12,089	14,170	+589	+2,081
Cultural programs.....	24,562	22,408	25,062	+500	+2,654
International park affairs.....	1,648	1,310	1,648	---	+338
Environmental and compliance review.....	433	385	433	---	+48
Grant administration.....	2,004	---	2,004	---	+2,004
Heritage Partnership Programs.....	19,821	809	20,321	+500	+19,512
Total, National Recreation and Preservation.....	62,638	37,001	63,638	+1,000	+26,637

891

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
<b>Historic Preservation Fund</b>					
State historic preservation offices.....	47,925	42,134	48,925	+1,000	+6,791
Tribal grants.....	10,485	8,968	11,485	+1,000	+2,519
Competitive grants.....	13,500	---	13,500	---	+13,500
Save America's Treasures grants.....	5,000	---	13,000	+8,000	+13,000
Historic Revitalization grants.....	---	---	5,000	+5,000	+5,000
Grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities	4,000	---	5,000	+1,000	+5,000
<b>Total, Historic Preservation Fund.....</b>	<b>80,910</b>	<b>51,100</b>	<b>96,910</b>	<b>+16,000</b>	<b>+45,810</b>
<b>Construction</b>					
<b>General Program:</b>					
Line item construction and maintenance.....	131,992	137,011	137,011	+5,019	---
Emergency and unscheduled.....	3,855	3,848	3,848	-7	---
Housing.....	2,200	2,200	2,200	---	---
Dam safety.....	1,248	1,247	1,247	-1	---
Equipment replacement.....	13,500	13,474	13,474	-26	---
Planning, construction.....	7,966	17,453	12,711	+4,745	-4,742
Construction program management.....	36,771	40,656	38,713	+1,942	-1,943
General management plans.....	11,821	10,640	12,500	+679	+1,860
General program increase.....	---	---	138,000	+138,000	+138,000
<b>Total, Construction.....</b>	<b>209,353</b>	<b>226,529</b>	<b>359,704</b>	<b>+150,351</b>	<b>+133,175</b>
<b>Land and Water Conservation Fund (rescission of contract authority).....</b>	<b>-28,000</b>	<b>-28,020</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>+28,000</b>	<b>+28,020</b>

890

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
Land Acquisition and State Assistance					
Assistance to States:					
State conservation grants (formula).....	94,000	---	100,000	+6,000	+100,000
State conservation grants (competitive).....	12,000	---	20,000	+8,000	+20,000
Administrative expenses.....	4,006	3,043	4,006	---	+963
Subtotal.....	110,006	3,043	124,006	+14,000	+120,963
National Park Service:					
Acquisitions.....	21,488	---	26,400	+4,912	+26,400
Recreational Access.....	2,000	---	2,000	---	+2,000
American Battlefield Protection Program.....	10,000	8,481	10,000	---	+1,519
Emergencies, Hardships, Relocations, and Deficiencies.....	3,928	3,071	3,928	---	+857
Acquisition Management.....	9,679	8,716	9,679	---	+963
Inholdings, Donations, and Exchanges.....	4,928	3,069	4,928	---	+1,859
Subtotal.....	52,023	23,337	56,935	+4,912	+33,598
Subtotal, Land Acquisition and State Assistance.	162,029	26,380	180,941	+18,912	+154,561
Total, Land Acquisition and State Assistance....	162,029	26,380	180,941	+18,912	+154,561

89m

DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
Centennial Challenge.....	20,000	14,971	23,000	+3,000	+8,029
TOTAL, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.....	2,931,948	2,553,446	3,202,162	+270,214	+648,716
UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY					
Surveys, Investigations, and Research					
Ecosystems:					
Status and trends.....	20,473	16,834	20,473	---	+3,639
Fisheries: Aquatic and endangered resources.....	21,136	15,846	20,136	-1,000	+4,290
Wildlife: Terrestrial and endangered resources.....	46,007	35,471	46,007	---	+10,536
Terrestrial, Freshwater and marine environments.....	37,415	29,342	36,415	-1,000	+7,073
Invasive species.....	17,330	17,297	17,330	---	+33
Cooperative research units.....	17,371	17,338	17,371	---	+33
Total, Ecosystems.....	159,732	132,128	157,732	-2,000	+25,604
Climate and Land Use Change (FY 2017 Structure):					
Climate Variability:					
Climate science centers.....	25,335	---	---	-25,335	---
Climate research and development.....	19,295	---	---	-19,295	---
Carbon sequestration.....	8,959	---	---	-8,959	---
Subtotal.....	53,589	---	---	-53,589	---

89



## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
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Land Use Change:					
Land remote sensing.....	85,794	---	---	-85,794	---
Land change science.....	9,892	---	---	-9,892	---
Subtotal.....	95,686	---	---	-95,686	---
Total, Climate and Land Use Change.....	149,275	---	---	-149,275	---
Land Resources (Proposed FY 2018 Structure):					
National Land Imaging.....	---	76,127	93,094	+93,094	+18,967
Land change science.....	---	19,285	34,070	+34,070	+14,785
National and regional climate adaptation science centers.....	---	17,435	25,335	+25,335	+7,900
Total, Land Resources.....	---	112,847	152,499	+152,499	+39,652
Energy, Minerals, and Environmental Health:					
Mineral and Energy Resources:					
Minerals resources.....	48,371	48,279	49,371	+1,000	+1,092
Energy resources.....	24,695	26,125	30,872	+6,177	+4,747
Subtotal.....	73,066	74,404	80,243	+7,177	+5,839

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
Environmental Health:					
Contaminant biology.....	10,197	8,230	10,197	---	+1,967
Toxic substances hydrology.....	11,048	8,876	12,398	+1,350	+3,522
Subtotal.....	21,245	17,106	22,595	+1,350	+5,489
Total, Energy, Minerals, and Environmental Health.....	94,311	91,510	102,838	+8,527	+11,328
Natural Hazards:					
Earthquake hazards.....	64,303	51,388	83,403	+19,100	+32,015
Volcano hazards.....	28,121	22,432	42,621	+14,500	+20,189
Landslide hazards.....	3,538	3,531	3,538	---	+7
Global seismographic network.....	6,653	4,986	6,653	---	+1,667
Geomagnetism.....	1,888	---	1,888	---	+1,888
Coastal/Marine Hazards and Resources.....	40,510	35,774	40,510	---	+4,736
Total, Natural Hazards.....	145,013	118,111	178,613	+33,600	+60,502
Water Resources:					
Water Availability and Use Science Program.....	45,052	30,413	46,052	+1,000	+15,639
Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program.....	72,873	68,159	74,173	+1,500	+6,014
National Water Quality Program.....	90,529	74,470	90,829	+300	+16,359
Water Resources Research Act Program.....	6,500	---	6,500	---	+6,500
Total, Water Resources.....	214,754	173,042	217,554	+2,800	+44,512

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
Core Science Systems:					
Science, synthesis, analysis, and research.....	24,299	18,753	24,051	-248	+5,298
National cooperative geological mapping.....	24,397	22,281	24,397	---	+2,116
National Geospatial Program.....	67,354	51,935	67,854	+500	+15,919
Total, Core Science Systems.....	116,050	92,969	116,302	+252	+23,333
Science Support:					
Administration and Management.....	81,981	69,379	80,881	-1,100	+11,502
Information Services.....	23,630	19,989	21,947	-1,683	+1,958
Total, Science Support.....	105,611	89,368	102,828	-2,783	+13,460
Facilities:					
Rental payments and operations & maintenance.....	93,141	104,927	104,927	+11,786	---
Deferred maintenance and capital improvement.....	7,280	7,266	15,164	+7,884	+7,898
Total, Facilities.....	100,421	112,193	120,091	+19,670	+7,898
TOTAL, UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.....	1,085,167	922,168	1,148,457	+63,290	+226,289

899

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT					
Ocean Energy Management					
Renewable energy.....	23,887	21,676	21,676	-2,211	---
Conventional energy.....	58,963	58,123	58,123	-840	---
Environmental assessment.....	68,045	73,834	73,834	+5,789	---
Executive direction.....	18,665	17,367	17,367	-1,298	---
Subtotal.....	169,560	171,000	171,000	+1,440	---
Offsetting rental receipts.....	-88,487	-55,374	-55,374	+33,113	---
Cost recovery fees.....	-6,457	-1,460	-1,460	+4,997	---
Subtotal, offsetting collections.....	-94,944	-56,834	-56,834	+38,110	---
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TOTAL, BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT.....	74,616	114,166	114,166	+39,550	---
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89r

## DIVISION G -- DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2018 Request	Final Bill	Final Bill vs Enacted	Final Bill vs Request
BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT					
Offshore Safety and Environmental Enforcement					
Environmental enforcement.....	8,314	4,453	4,453	-3,861	---
Operations, safety and regulation.....	144,954	151,061	148,454	+3,500	-2,607
Administrative operations.....	18,268	18,350	18,768	-1,500	-1,582
Executive direction.....	18,236	18,318	18,736	-1,500	-1,582
Subtotal.....	189,772	192,182	186,411	-3,361	-5,771
Offsetting rental receipts.....	-37,922	-23,732	-23,732	+14,190	---
Inspection fees.....	-53,000	-62,000	-50,000	+3,000	+12,000
Cost recovery fees.....	-5,608	-4,139	-4,139	+1,469	---
Subtotal, offsetting collections.....	-96,530	-89,871	-77,871	+18,659	+12,000
Rescission.....	-25,000	---	---	+25,000	---
Total, Offshore Safety and Environmental Enforcement.....	68,242	102,311	108,540	+40,298	+6,229

895